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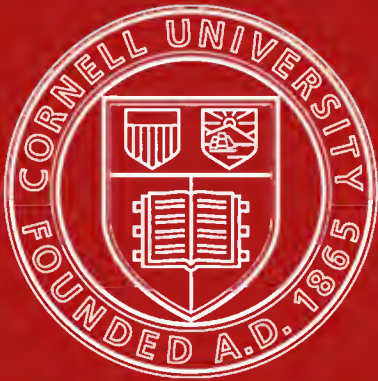
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LORD AUGUSTUS LOFTUS,
P.C., G.C.B.
1862—1879.

SECOND SERIES.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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THE
DIPLOMATIC REMINISCENCES
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On the close of my mission at the Court of Prussia, in November, 1862, I was permitted by Earl Russell to pass a few weeks at Baden-Baden before entering on my duties as Her Majesty's Minister at Munich.

After the severe affliction which had befallen me in

the previous year, my health and spirits had considerably suffered, and the continual strain on my nervous system of attending, with a mind veiled in gloom, to my public duties at a critical moment of affairs in Prussia, necessitated repose and relief from all mental occupation.

It was on this account that I received with great satisfaction my change of post, and my appointment to the mission at Munich, notwithstanding that the new position was of a lower grade than the posts I had previously filled at Vienna and Berlin.

As proof of the appreciation of my previous services, Earl Russell recommended me for the Knight Commandership of the Bath, and raised the mission at Munich to the first class, in order that my pension should not be impaired by my change of post.

There is a period in the life of most of us when it is advantageous to halt for a time in the rushing stream of life, and to take account of the past, before continuing our path in the exciting pursuit of worldly affairs. The pause is a repose for the mind; it affords an opportunity for calm reflection on the past, for which, in the world's din, time is rarely found, and if found, seldom utilised for this object—it is, in short, a healing process to worldly troubles and sorrows.

It was with those feelings that I entered on my new duties at Munich, a capital which, through the liberality and unceasing energy of King Louis I., had acquired the name of the “Modern Athens.” Here my

leisure hours were spent in the picture and sculpture galleries, and in visiting the studios of the many renowned artists who had been attracted to Munich by the munificent protection of the fine arts; and I may say that I regard my three years' residence at the Court of Bavaria as among the happiest and most enjoyable of my life.

Although Bavaria is not of such importance as to be regarded as a Great Power, or as exercising any great political influence in the affairs of Europe, there have been times when that State has played a considerable part in the history of Europe. In former times Bavaria was a Duchy-Fief of the German Empire. When the Bohemians revolted against the Emperor Ferdinand II. (and chose as their Sovereign the Elector Palatine, who had married the daughter of James I. of England), the command of the Austrian armies detailed to reduce them to submission was given to the Duke of Bavaria, and on his defeat of the Elector Palatine, the first and only king of Bohemia, the title of Elector was transferred from the latter to the Duke of Bavaria, with the Palatinate, and that title continued to be held by successive rulers of Bavaria until the Elector Maximilian IV. was raised to the dignity of a king by Napoleon I., on January 1, 1806.

Since the dissolution of the Germanic Confederation in 1866, Bavaria has maintained its sovereign independence, and forms, next to Prussia, the largest State of the existing German Empire. Its reigning family—the Wittelsbach dynasty—is the oldest in Germany.

The present ruler is the Regent, Prince Luitpold, son of King Louis I., and brother of King Maximilian II. Great misfortunes have befallen this family of late years. On the death of King Maximilian in 1864, his son, King Louis II., succeeded to the throne. He was of an eccentric character; his education had not been suitable to the high position he was destined to fill. His great passions were for poetry, music, and theatrical representations. He was devoted to the great composer Wagner, and lavished large sums in furtherance of that master's operas and theatrical representations. The King was fond of solitude, and too much given to sentimentality. He resided chiefly at Hohenschwangau, a lovely spot in the Bavarian Highlands, where he constructed a magnificent château.

The king was not without abilities, but they were not of a practical nature, especially for a sovereign. With many good qualities, he had an unevenly-balanced mind, as was later proved by his untimely and tragic death, when his only brother, Prince Otho, nominally succeeded, and still holds the regal title. But he too for some years past has been declared of unsound mind, and lives under restraint at the palace of Nymphenburg, near Munich. In consequence of this calamity, the Regency devolved on the next heir, Prince Luitpold, whose second son, Prince Louis, is married to the Archduchess Gisela, eldest daughter of the Emperor of Austria.

Munich is a fine town on the Isar; the older portion is very picturesque, the modern portion owes its chief

beauty to the public buildings erected by King Louis I., on which he spent large sums. Whatever money could be gathered from the military budget, he expended for artistic purposes, and he thus raised Munich to be the foremost capital of Germany in the development of art and science.

The society of Munich was not large, but it was very genial, and composed of the old Suabian nobility, dating back for generations, and of historic tradition. Among them I may mention Princes Oettingen-Spielberg, Hohenlohe-Schillingfurst, Fugger, Counts Pappenheim, Schönborn-Weisenthaid, Lerchenfeldt, Bassenheim, and many others. There was a large Diplomatic Body, and the reunions of the local nobility and of the Foreign Ministers were very agreeable, without pretension or formality. The theatre was one of the best in Germany, and was largely subsidised by the King.

The buildings constructed by King Louis I. comprised a sculpture gallery, called the Glyptothek, and the Pinakothek, forming two galleries—one for old paintings and the other for pictures of the modern school. These were adorned with frescoes painted by the renowned Cornelius, who likewise executed the frescoes in the Museum at Berlin. There were also fine frescoes by Kaulbach, Schnorr, Overbeck, and other great artists. All these buildings are of Grecian architecture—simple but chaste. The cultivation of the fine arts by Louis I., and the pains he took to attract to Munich the rising artists of the day, gave to his

capital an interest which few capitals in Germany at that period enjoyed.

Some of the old towns in Bavaria, such as Ratisbon, Augsburg, Wurzburg, Bamberg, Nuremberg, Furth, etc., are of great antiquity and well worth visiting, and their historic traditions are of great interest.

The country, for generations back, has been well governed; the people are well-off and industrious, loyal and contented, and, referring to thirty years ago, there was no part of Germany where happiness, union, and contentment pervaded all classes of society more than in Bavaria.

I arrived with my family at Munich on the 26th of January, 1863. I had engaged the house belonging to Count Bassenheim, on the Caroline Platz, which was partially furnished, and by the kind assistance of Mr. Bonar, who had been acting *Chargé d’Affaires*, I was enabled to take possession at once, thus avoiding the discomfort of going to an hotel.

On the following day I called on Baron Schrenck—then Bavarian Minister for Foreign Affairs—and, placing copies of my credentials in his hands, requested him to take their Majesties’ orders with respect to the audiences which I solicited for the presentation of the Queen’s letters.

My audiences were fixed for the 1st of February, and I accordingly repaired to the Palace at the appointed hour, and placed in His Majesty’s hands the Queen’s letter, accrediting me as her Envoy at His Majesty’s Court, accompanying it with suitable compliments in

Her Majesty's name. The King received me very graciously, and was pleased to express his satisfaction at my appointment as Her Majesty's representative.

His Majesty inquired with great interest after the health of the Queen and of the Royal Family. He said that he was a great admirer of England and of the English Constitution, and expressed a keen desire to revisit a country which, during his short stay many years ago, had inspired him with deep interest.

The King then entered into some conversation on the internal state of affairs in Prussia, and on the commercial differences then pending between Northern and Southern Germany—in regard to the Treaty of Commerce between the Zollverein and France, and the renewal of the Zollverein treaties—expressing a hope that all difficulties would be removed. His Majesty did not refer to any other question of European interest, and did not allude in any way to the affairs of Greece.

I subsequently had an audience of the Queen of Bavaria to deliver the Queen's letter.

Her Majesty received me very graciously, inquiring with deep interest after the Queen and the Royal Family, and, referring to the approaching marriage of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, expressed her hope that it would be attended with every blessing, and prove a comfort and consolation to Her Majesty the Queen.

The Queen was the daughter of Prince and Princess William of Prussia (or, as the Prince was generally termed at Berlin in my early days, "Der Alte Wilhelm").

I had been personally acquainted with Her Majesty in those days, and was at Berlin when the marriage with the Prince Royal of Bavaria—afterwards King Maximilian—took place.

I subsequently had audiences of their Royal Highnesses Prince and Princess Luitpold, Prince Louis, Prince Charles, and the Duchess Louise of Bavaria. On application to Baron Schrenck for presentation to the King and Queen of Greece and the Queen of Naples, being members of the Bavarian Royal Family then residing at Munich, he informed me that King Otho and the Queen of Greece had not as yet received any member of the Diplomatic Corps, nor had their Majesties appeared at Court when the Foreign Ministers were invited: consequently it would not be necessary for me to ask formally for audiences, and that he would take care to make known to their Majesties the desire I had expressed. He said that the Queen of Naples was living in the strictest retirement, and that her health did not at present admit of her appearance in public.

The Queen of Naples had suffered much from over-fatigue of mind and body during the siege of Gaeta, where she had acted nobly in support of her husband, and had given heroic encouragement to the defenders of his throne. To recruit her health she was ordered by her medical adviser to the baths of Soden, near Frankfort. After undergoing a course of the Soden baths and waters, she suffered from a state of great depression of mind, and under the effect of that depression she retired to a convent at Augsburg.

She later took up her residence at the Palace of Biedersheim, near the capital, where she lived in perfect seclusion, never appearing at Court, or taking any part in the festivities of the Court circle.

Previous to leaving Munich on the 8th of April, to rejoin King Francis II. at Rome, Her Majesty was pleased to receive the Foreign Ministers and members of the Diplomatic Corps, and, out of respect to a Royal Princess of the House of Bavaria, I accepted the invitation addressed to me by the Marchese de Cito, the Neapolitan Minister at the Bavarian Court. Her Majesty received me very graciously, and I was much impressed by her graceful bearing and charm of manner. It was painful to see the havoc which her severe trials had produced, and the traces of suffering she had undergone. A gloom had overspread that lovely countenance which only a few months previously had shone with the brightness and happiness of beauteous youth! But it expressed, nevertheless, a peaceful resignation, a calm acquiescence in the decree of Providence. Alas! how true is it that a "throne is not a bed of roses."

It was at this time also that the throne of Greece became vacant by the expulsion of King Otho, brother of the King of Bavaria. In my conversations with Baron Schrenck, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, he evinced some susceptibility that candidates for the vacant throne should have been proposed by Her Majesty's Government, to the entire exclusion of the Bavarian dynasty.

I replied that I had received no instructions from Earl Russell on Greek affairs, but that I could venture to assure him that Her Majesty's Government must not be supposed to entertain any feeling of hostility to the Bavarian dynasty. I stated that it had always been the policy of Great Britain to respect the independence of nations, and not to impose on any people a Sovereign against their will. He must be aware of the resolution passed by general acclamation at Athens, declaring the exclusion of the Bavarian dynasty from the throne, and, consequently, it would have been inconsistent with the policy of Her Majesty's Government, and a want of due consideration towards the Greek nation, if they had suggested a Bavarian prince as the successor of King Otho.

Although the restoration of King Otho was regarded as hopeless, the King and his Ministers conceived it possible that the throne might be transferred to a Bavarian prince, in the person of Prince Louis, son of Prince Luitpold; and some efforts were made in this direction, but without success. Baron Schrenck stated that hitherto the Bavarian Government had maintained a purely passive attitude, but that, as the offers of the throne of Greece had been declined by so many candidates, the King his master considered that the moment had come when a proposal should be submitted to the protecting Powers, inviting them to return to the treaties which provided for the succession to the throne of Greece.

He said that he had reason to think this course would be accepted by Russia, and that it would not be viewed with disfavour by France.

Baron Schrenck then expatiated on the predominant influence of England in Greece, observing that any candidate supported by Her Majesty's Government would be certain to be viewed with favour by the Greek nation. He did not state that any formal instructions had been sent to the Bavarian Minister in London (Baron Cetto) in this sense, but that he had been only instructed by the King to mention the subject to me; and he requested me to convey the opinions of the King to Her Majesty's Government.

Having mentioned to me this subject by the King's order, I inquired of Baron Schrenck whether this communication was to be viewed as signifying the formal abdication of King Otho. Secondly, whether it was intended to imply that Prince Louis was to be placed on the list of candidates for election by the Greek nation. And, thirdly, whether he was to be put forward as King Otho's successor in virtue of treaty regulations.

To my first question Baron Schrenck replied that King Otho had not abdicated, and had expressed no intention of doing so, but that he might be induced to do so if he could be assured of his nephew's election.

To my second question Baron Schrenck gave no very clear reply, merely stating that Her Majesty's Government had undertaken to recommend candidates to the Greek nation, and that if the succession of Prince Louis should be supported by Her Majesty's Government, it would be favourably received in Greece.

I stated that I would duly report to Her Majesty's Government the communication he had made to me by

the King's order, but that I must frankly confess I did not anticipate it would be attended with any favourable results. The Greek nation, I observed, had unmistakably declared itself against the Bavarian dynasty. He must, therefore, admit that it was scarcely to be expected that a proposal of the nature he had made could meet with the concurrence of Her Majesty's Government.

The Greek question did not interest public opinion in Bavaria. It was regarded as one merely of a dynastic character, and as not affecting the interests of the nation. The question was finally brought to an end by a protest from the Bavarian Government, addressed to all the Bavarian Legations—to all the European Powers, and not alone to the protecting Powers—on behalf of the claim of the Bavarian dynasty to the throne of Greece.

I must do Baron Schrenck the justice to say that in all our conversations on this thorny subject his language was always conciliatory and courteous, and that not one word of ill-will or resentment escaped him.

My diplomatic duties at Munich were light in comparison with those I had to perform at the more important Courts of Vienna and Berlin. Bavaria understood that she had not the attributes, like Austria and Prussia, of a Great Power. She was satisfied to treat all European questions at the Germanic Diet, and not to be drawn into the vortex of European policy, except through the instrumentality of her Federal duties. The great object of the minor States, under the leadership of Bavaria and Saxony, was to form a third group, usually

alled the "Triad," in the Germanic Diet, and thus, through this channel, to exercise their influence in the direction of German as well as in European affairs. Thus it was, when invited by Her Majesty's Government to support at St. Petersburg a communication on the affairs of Poland, to be addressed to the Imperial Government by Her Majesty's Ambassador at that Court, Baron Schrenck replied that Bavaria, not having been a co-signer of the Treaties of Vienna in 1815, was not in a position to make the appeal to the Russian Government which Her Majesty's Government desired. "It would be a departure," he said, "from the habitual policy of the Bavarian Government, which did not consider that it was in a position to give counsel or advice to a Great Power like Russia, unless the initiative had been taken previously by the Germanic Diet.

"It was probable," he added, "that the question of Poland might be brought before the Diet at Frankfort, when that body might collectively give expression to their opinion, or authorise each member of the Diet to express separately the views and counsels of the State which he represented on a question which so nearly concerned the interests of Germany."

A similar case occurred when the Emperor Napoleon addressed an invitation to the King of Bavaria to attend a Congress at Paris of the Sovereigns of Europe, for a general settlement of the affairs of Europe. In regard to the reply to be given by the King of Bavaria, Baron Schrenck observed to me that the question of an European Congress more properly belonged to the

decision of the Great Powers, and that Bavaria was not directly concerned in such a general settlement. The acceptance of the invitation by Bavaria would, therefore, be guided by the decision of the two great German Powers.

In referring to the objects of the Congress, Baron Schrenck observed that however laudable the intentions might be which dictated the idea of the Emperor Napoleon, yet he could not disguise from himself the difficulties, and even dangers, to which the assembling of an European Congress might give rise. "How," said His Excellency, "are the many divergent questions to be harmonised between the several Great Powers—questions in which their vital interests may be gravely concerned? Are these questions to be decided by a majority of votes in the Congress? Can it be expected that changes affecting existing territorial arrangements will be passively assented to by those Powers from which sacrifices are reclaimed?"

Baron Schrenck was apprehensive that the result of a Congress, should it meet, would be to define more acutely than at the present time the questions on which the Powers of Europe differed, rather than to provide for their peaceful solution, or to secure to Europe a permanent basis for the maintenance of the general peace.

The King of Bavaria, in his answer to the Emperor Napoleon, expressed his approval of the idea to bring about a general pacification by the mode proposed, and his readiness to co-operate in this laudable aim within the limits agreed upon, and should the Great Powers

accept the Congress. His Majesty further stated that he coincided in the opinion expressed in the Imperial invitation, that the Treaties of Vienna had been in certain cases infringed, but that in His Majesty's opinion they still continued to form the basis of European international law. The King expressed in courteous terms his acceptance of the invitation, conditionally on its acceptance by the Great Powers.

A short time afterwards Count Reculot delivered to Baron Schrenck copy of a Circular Despatch from M. Drouyn de Lhuys, suggesting Ministerial Conferences, to be attended by the several Ministers for Foreign Affairs, previously to the meeting of the Congress. It referred to the refusal of England to take part in a Congress, and suggested, although without any direct allusion to her, that the idea and wish of the Emperor Napoleon for a pacific adjustment of European questions might be effectively obtained by means of Ministerial Conferences, without the co-operation of England. This Despatch contained one remarkable phrase: it stated that France, in proposing a Congress for the pacification of Europe, "*had no claim to make for herself.*"

Baron Schrenck replied to Count Reculot that Bavaria could appear at no Congress unless Austria and Prussia were present. He informed me later that Count Rechberg, Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, in a Despatch to Prince Metternich, Austrian Ambassador at Paris, referred to the refusal of England to accept the Congress, and had conveyed to the Cabinet of the

Tuilleries a positive refusal on the part of Austria to accept a Congress unless all the Great Powers were represented ; evidently, although not in express terms, declining to take part in a Congress without the co-operation of Great Britain.

Baron Schrenck, in consequence of the Austrian Despatch, considered that the whole question would be allowed to drop, which was finally the result.

The political questions which engrossed public attention in Bavaria during my short residence at that Court were :—(1) Those relating to the Treaty of Commerce between France and the Zollverein, signed at Berlin in 1862, and the negotiations connected with the renewal of the Zollverein treaties, which would expire in 1865 ; (2) the interminable question of the Danish Duchies ; and (3) the question of Federal Reform. Of each of these questions I will give my readers a short analysis, without entering into wearisome details.

With regard to the Treaty of Commerce with France, great opposition to it was raised in Bavaria, which at one time menaced a disruption of the Zollverein and the formation of a Commercial Union with Austria. The South German States which were associated with Bavaria in this “Sonderbund” were Würtemberg, Saxony, Grand-Ducal Hesse, Baden, and Nassau. Hanover and Hesse, from their geographical position, held aloof, and were indisposed to encounter the opposition of public opinion by seceding from the Zollverein.

The threatened disruption of the Zollverein was

a mere lever put forth to obtain concessions in favour of Austria, for it was evident that the German nation would never tolerate a return to the German Custom House system, which had in previous days proved so destructive to trade and to the freedom of commercial intercourse, independently of the financial advantages which each of the German States had derived from their common association.

Conferences were held by the Southern States at Wurzburg and other places—exciting speeches were made, resolutions were passed. In the meantime no actual result was achieved. Prussia, at the last moment, brought the question to an issue by addressing a Circular to all the States of the Zollverein, formally notifying the cessation of the Zollverein treaties on their expiration in December, 1865. This had the desired effect. Negotiations were renewed; concessions were mutually granted; the renewal of the Zollverein was effected, and the Commercial Treaty with France was confirmed, after a considerable loss of time and an useless expenditure of ink.

On the second question, viz., that of the interminable “Danish Duchies,” public opinion in Bavaria was deeply moved. On the death of the King of Denmark, and the accession of the present Sovereign (in conformity with the Treaty of London), Prince Frederick of Augustenburg claimed his right to the Duchy of Holstein.

The Federal execution ordered by the Diet, and composed of Hanoverian and other Federal troops,

remained in occupation of the Duchy. The legal rights of Prince Frederick were acknowledged by the King of Bavaria. The decision as to the legal heir rested with the Diet, but, in consequence of the opposition of Prussia, the question was constantly postponed, and no decision taken. The delay caused great excitement in Bavaria. The King, who had intended to pass the winter at Rome for his health, felt it his duty (by the advice of his Minister) to return to his capital. Stormy meetings were held, the object of which was to induce the King to put himself at the head of 50,000 troops of the South German States, and to march into Holstein with a view to instal the rightful heir, Prince Frederick of Augustenburg, as Duke of Holstein. In the meantime, by a Convention signed at Gastein, Austria and Prussia had agreed to act in common as Great Powers, and not as members of the Diet, and had marched considerable forces into Holstein and Sleswig.

The King of Bavaria, seeing that if he consented to the proposal made to him he would find himself in collision with Austria and Prussia, thus giving rise to war, wisely abstained from such a course.

The Federal troops of execution withdrew, and Austria and Prussia were left in sole occupation of the Duchies.

In the meanwhile that active-minded statesman, Baron Beust, visited Munich to confer with Baron Schrenck, with the object of bringing about a decision of the Diet as to the rights of Prince Frederick of

Augustenburg to the Duchy of Holstein ; but all their plans and cogitations to put life into that infirm body were fruitless. The military success of Austria and Prussia finally put an end to all the manœuvres of the Saxon and Bavarian Ministers. A Conference of the European Powers was convoked in London, at which Count Beust took part, as the first and last representative of the Germanic Confederation at an European Congress. It broke up without any pacificatory result. The war was resumed, and after the capture of the Island of Alsen, peace was signed in October, 1864, at Vienna, when the Duchies were given up by Denmark to Austria and Prussia. It left in the hands of the two great German Powers the final adjudication as to the future possession of the Duchies, which it was clearly evident that Count Bismarck would not permit to escape from his grasp.

I may be excused for dwelling so much in my narrative on the question of the Danish Duchies, for it was in reality the prelude to the war which followed. The question of Sleswig-Holstein was the hinge on which the popular feeling in Germany turned. It was the lever to which Count Bismarck looked for the realisation of his plans against Austria, and for the final annexation of the Duchies to Prussia. It is not without interest to follow the various stages by which Count Bismarck gradually advanced to the success of his policy—drawing Austria in his wake, isolating the Federal Diet—and at the same time gratifying the German nation by detaching the Duchies from Denmark.

The third political question to which I have alluded was that of Federal Reform. On this question it was clear that neither Austria, nor Bavaria, nor Saxony, could harmonise with the views of Count Bismarck. It was not a reform of the Germanic Diet that Count Bismarck aimed at, but its abolition. It was not parity with Austria in Germany that he had in view, but the exclusion of Austria from Germany, and the establishment of Prussian supremacy; and these he foresaw could only be obtained by the sword, or, as he expressed it, by “*Blut und Eisen*.” He knew that all negotiations with Austria on this subject were futile, for Austria could never give up her position in Germany without a struggle, and nothing less would satisfy him.

The exclusion of Austria from Germany; the sweeping-away of the Germanic Diet; the creation of a German Empire vested in Prussia, with an Imperial representation, were fixed purposes in Count Bismarck’s mind, and he only awaited a favourable moment to accomplish them.

All combinations, all suggestions to effect a better understanding on this subject between Austria and Prussia were rejected by the latter. The last serious attempt was made in August, 1863, when a meeting of the German Sovereigns was invited by the Emperor of Austria, to take place at Frankfort on the 15th of August.

It was attended by the King of Bavaria and all the German Sovereigns with the exception of the King of Prussia. The object of the meeting was “to take

into consideration certain proposals which would be submitted by the Emperor of Austria for a reform of the Federal Pact, and a reorganisation of the Germanic Diet in harmony with the requirements of the times, and in conformity with the maintenance of the Federal engagements."

By the terms of the Federal Pact no changes could be effected in the Federal Constitution unless by the unanimous assent of all the members of the Diet. Consequently the resolutions submitted by the Emperor of Austria, and agreed to by the Congress of German Sovereigns, would not be valid without the consent of Prussia. As, therefore, Prussia refused to take an active part in those proceedings, and thereby isolated herself in Germany, her negative influence sufficed to prevent the carrying-out of any measures as regarded Federal Reform to which she refused her assent.

The King of Saxony was deputed by the Sovereigns assembled at Frankfort to repair to Baden-Baden, where the King of Prussia was then residing, to endeavour to induce His Majesty to reconsider his refusal to attend the Congress; but, although cordially received by the King of Prussia, he did not succeed in changing His Majesty's decision.

In consequence of the King of Prussia's refusal to agree to the proposals submitted to the Sovereigns at Frankfort, the question of Federal Reform remained in abeyance.

It appears that in his reply the King of Prussia laid down, as the basis on which Prussia could assent to

Federal Reform, two conditions, which Bavaria and the other States that had accepted the Austrian programme could not accept:—(1) The veto claimed for the two great German Powers; (2) the formation of a representative assembly for Germany by direct election of the people.

In regard to the first, Baron Schrenck observed that the granting an absolute veto to Austria and Prussia would be in direct contradiction with the principles for which a dualism was projected, and would virtually render the minor States entirely dependent on the will of either of the Great Powers. It was rather calculated to destroy than to strengthen the Federal Union.

In regard to the second condition, Baron Schrenck stated that the idea of a representative assembly was subversive of the existing Federal organisation, and could not be characterised as a measure of reform.

Such a Parliament would be virtually independent of the Sovereigns and Governments of the several States, and its authority, derived from the German nation, would override that of the independent Sovereigns. Such an assembly would only be responsible to the body which elected them, and, consequently, differences might arise between this assembly and the representative Chambers of the several States, which would not only produce chaos and confusion, but which might gravely compromise the right of Monarchical Government in Germany.

Baron Schrenck considered that no result to the endeavours for Federal Reform could be attained so long

as Prussia persisted in her course of opposition, and that the question would remain in abeyance until some great crisis should forcibly bring about its solution.

This crisis, as will be shown later in this work, took place in 1866.

I will now diverge from the rather dry and unsatisfactory arena of politics to a more genial subject—namely, the annual popular fête, in which, as at Stuttgart, the Sovereign celebrates with his people the close of the harvest. It was held in a large field within view of the huge statue of Bavaria, where a kiosk had been erected for His Majesty, the Court, and the Diplomatic Corps. Specimens of all the products of the soil, tastefully arranged with flowers, are paraded before the King, and are followed by a procession of the cattle, horses, sheep, etc., under the management of their owners, dressed in the national costume.

This fête, of old tradition, is annually attended by a large concourse of peasants from all the provinces, and is pleasurably looked forward to during the year by all classes of the population. Prizes are also given to the successful competitors.

Their Majesties were received on this occasion with great enthusiasm. It was a patriarchal custom for the Sovereign to associate himself with his people in this national fête. It represents the “Harvest Home” as celebrated in England in olden times, when the landlord and his tenants used to banquet together, and enjoy themselves under the cheery influence of home-brewed ale. These traditional and national fêtes—so

characteristic of happy, merry Old England, so genial to the national feeling—are, I am sorry to say, fast disappearing, leaving only for history the recollections of their joyous times.

The immediate neighbourhood of Munich is flat and uninteresting, but within a few hours are reached the Bavarian Highlands, the scenery of which is unrivalled. Bavaria also abounds in beautiful lakes. The Lake of Starnberg, thirteen miles long, has many villas on its smiling banks, with the grand Bavarian Alps as a background. It was in this lake, while residing at a royal villa, that the late King Louis II. committed suicide in a moment of insanity. Near the termination of the lake is Ober Ammergau, where the Passion Play is represented by a troupe of peasants every ten years. These plays have now become of European interest, and attract vast numbers of strangers from all parts. Although a theatrical representation of so solemn a scene might appear to be an act of profaneness, it is conducted with the greatest reverence; and I have been told by several clergymen who have viewed it that it made a deep impression on them, and they considered that, instead of producing evil, it was calculated to awaken in many hearts the deepest religious feeling and contrition.

The Chiem See, or lake, which is skirted by the railway to Salzburg, is also a large lake of great beauty, on an island of which King Louis II. constructed a palace, on which he spent a considerable sum of money. As the Sovereign possesses several palaces, which are a heavy expense on the Civil List, I believe this palace on

the Chiem See, which was not finished at the time of the King's death, is destined for some charitable purpose.

Of the other lakes in Bavaria, the most worthy of notice is the Tegern See, on which was the residence of Prince Charles of Bavaria. It is a lovely spot, surrounded by high mountains, and is famous for its trout-fishing. There are many villas in its neighbourhood, and in the summer season it is the resort of many of the Diplomatic Corps.

I passed a summer at Reichenhall, where there is a famous salt spring and baths. It is not far from Salzburg, and has lately become a fashionable watering-place, much frequented by the Austrian nobility. It is strongly recommended to those who suffer from asthma and chest maladies. Along both sides of the salt works, which extend some distance, there is a promenade with seats, where invalids can inhale the salt air, as at the seaside, without the damp arising from it. There is also a covered arcade, in which is introduced the steam, impregnated with salt, from the hot spring. The invalids walk every morning for some time in this enclosed arcade, enveloped in linen mantles (to prevent the salt from injuring their dress), and inhale thus the salt steam, and many cures have been effected by this course. This, I believe, is the only institution of the kind in Europe.

We made a lovely excursion from Reichenhall to Berchtesgaden and the König See. It is a small, beautiful lake, surrounded by high mountains. The scenery is magnificent. We rowed round the lake, and

from the boat some chamois were pointed out to us, but they were at a great distance.

King Maximilian had a chalet in the mountains, which he occasionally visited to shoot chamois, of which there are a considerable number. Stands are erected, where the sportsman is concealed, on certain known passes for the chamois, when it requires a good aim to take effect; it is difficult sometimes to recover the chamois if shot, but it is very exciting sport.

There is a royal villa at Berchtesgaden, where King Maximilian used to reside, but since his death it has not been occupied by the Court.

On the 9th of March, 1864, the King of Bavaria was seized with a violent attack of erysipelas in the chest. It was said that the malady was caused by His Majesty having pricked a boil on his chest with a breast-pin, which caused the poisonous virus to diffuse itself into the system. The great delicacy of the King's constitution and his general debility rendered his state very alarming from the commencement. His Majesty expired on the 10th of March. The Crown Prince was immediately proclaimed King, under the title of Louis II., and the troops of the garrison were assembled, and took the oath of allegiance to the new Sovereign. The deceased monarch was much beloved and respected by his subjects, and his loss was universally deplored.

The new reign commenced under very favourable auspices. A youthful Sovereign always inspires a people with hopeful expectations, and the loyalty and devotion of the Bavarian nation to the ancient dynasty of the

Wittelsbach family were evinced on the accession of the young King to the throne. At first he showed a great desire for the conscientious performance of his regal duties, and a wish to gain the confidence of his people. An address to His Majesty was proposed in the Lower Chamber in favour of a general amnesty for all political offenders, including those who had been expatriated in consequence of the events of 1848-49. He at once, without awaiting the result of the motion, empowered his Ministry to declare his intention to grant the desired amnesty.

The late King, his father, had transacted all State business through the medium of his private secretary, and rarely saw his Ministers. The young King commenced by transacting the affairs of State daily with his Ministers; but this good resolution was of short duration, and His Majesty reverted to the former system of communicating with them through his private secretary. Shortly after his accession Baron Schrenck requested to be relieved of the Ministry of the Royal Household and for Foreign Affairs. The King acceded to his request, and the Ministry was provisionally confided to M. de Neumayer, the Minister of the Interior. Other changes in the Cabinet took place by the retirement of the Ministers of Justice and of Public Works.

After the lapse of a few weeks Baron von der Pfordten, Bavarian Envoy to the Diet at Frankfort, was appointed Minister of the Royal Household and for Foreign Affairs, and Baron Schrenck was selected for his successor at Frankfort.

The selection of Herr von der Pfordten for the very responsible post of Minister for Foreign Affairs, in the critical state of German affairs, naturally gave rise to some comments, chiefly occasioned by his antecedents when previously in power; but, in the absence at the moment of any competitor of equal merit and capacity with Herr von der Pfordten, his nomination was favourably received. He was known to be a staunch supporter of the rights of Prince Frederick of Augustenburg to the sovereignty of Holstein and in favour of the independence of the Duchies. On being thus relieved of the direction of Foreign Affairs, Herr von Neumayer, the Minister of the Interior, resigned his post on the ground of ill-health, which was accepted by the King, and the direction of the Ministry was provisionally confided to the Minister of Public Worship. Herr von Neumayer had always been considered the most Liberal member of the Cabinet, and his retirement was viewed with much regret by the country.

Much disappointment and discontent among all classes in the country was commencing to show itself from the turn of mind and mode of life of the King. His Majesty seldom or never saw his Ministers. He was absorbed with poetry and music, and his taste for the latter brought him, unfortunately, into frequent intercourse with the composer Herr Wagner, on whom he lavished large sums of money for his operatic representations. On one occasion the opera *Tristan und Isolde* was given at the Court Theatre, at a considerable cost, lasting for several hours, with His Majesty as the sole audience!

When absent from the Queen-Mother, the King led a solitary life, dispensing with the attendance of any members of his Court. It was His Majesty's frequent habit to make long excursions in the mountains on horseback, often at night, attended only by a favourite groom, with whom His Majesty conversed freely on all subjects.

These eccentricities were generally known by the public, producing a very unfavourable impression, and the comments of the public were without any reserve; but at the same time a great indulgence was evinced by all classes towards the King on account of his youth and the imperfect education he had received. His many amiable qualities, and his love for his people—being always ready to do a noble and kind action—condoned in some measure these eccentricities. It was hoped that as he advanced in years he would gain experience and wisdom, and that he would be disposed to follow the counsels of those who, from age, position, and known attachment to the interests of the country, were naturally qualified to be his advisers. But, alas! these hopes were not destined to be realised. His brain—under the influence of his fantastic imagination—became more and more excited, and in a moment of mental derangement, in April, 1886, he threw himself into the lake of Starnberg, and was drowned. His sudden end was a severe shock to the Queen-Mother, who had been for some time in great grief at the hopeless condition of her second son, Prince Otho, who had been suffering from complete aberration of mind,

and was under restraint at the palace of Nymphenburg, near Munich.

On the death of King Louis, Prince Otho was nominally recognised as his successor, but being declared incapable of reigning, a Regency was established under Prince Luitpold, the next heir.

During my stay at Munich I occupied my leisure hours in visiting the Pinakothek, the Glyptothek, and other museums of art, as well as in visiting the studios of some of the renowned artists, such as Cornelius, Kaulbach, and Pilate.

I derived the greatest pleasure in passing much time with Baron Liebig, the renowned European chemist. He used frequently to dine with me, and always brought something of interest to amuse and to instruct my children: one time an aërolite—giving an explanation of it; another time a looking-glass—for which he had discovered a new silvering preparation—and other objects of interest. His mind was always occupied with the development of science, and in his garden he engaged in various experiments for the improved culture of tobacco, potatoes, beet, and other similar products.

He explained to me that useful agricultural system which he had introduced into Southern Germany for the maintenance of the fertility of the soil, and for the benefit of the farming population. Its leading feature was the formation of the country into circles, which he called in German "*Versuchs*" stations. For each circle there was an agricultural chemist, thoroughly

acquainted with the properties of land, whose duty it was to advise the expedients to be applied for its enrichment, the crops to be grown, the manures to be used; it was also his duty to analyse the guano or other applications for the improvement of the soil, so as to develop its intrinsic worth; to recommend the course to be taken in regard to fattening animals; to analyse—as far as possible—the soil, in order to know, if unfertile, what remedy to apply to it; and to hold frequent lectures within his circle, for the purpose of instructing the farmer in regard to agriculture in general, and the process of store-feeding of cattle, sheep, etc.

His theory was that the same amount of fertilising elements taken from the land by the crops should be annually restored to it, and for this purpose each crop was weighed previous to its being housed. In every farmhouse was hung up a printed form of the requisite quantity of manure to return to the land for each crop, by which means the fertility of the land was maintained. Baron Liebig observed to me that it was proved that only those countries which had followed the principle of restoring to the land what had been taken from it had maintained their agricultural wealth, and he cited China and Japan. The system exists in Bavaria and Hesse-Darmstadt, and has been found to answer.

Baron Liebig was occupied at this time with an enterprise for providing a healthy and nutritious food at a diminished cost. Science, of late years, has rendered the most signal services to mankind in discoveries which have been productive of inestimable

benefits to the human race. Baron Liebig had introduced at Munich the use of soup made from the essence of meat, which had been tested and proved to be satisfactory at all the hospitals; but the high price of meat, and the consequent expense of the production of the essence, limited its use to medicinal purposes.

To give extension to this most useful discovery, Baron Liebig, aided by Mr. Giebert, a German engineer, organised in Uruguay an establishment for utilising the flesh of the animals previously slaughtered there in large quantities for their hides and tallow only. Mr. Giebert visited Munich, and learned from Baron Liebig the process invented by him for reducing the flesh to a pure and unadulterated essence. Baron Liebig had, at the time I am referring to, only received the first results of Mr. Giebert's undertaking, which he pronounced to be a perfect success, and he authorised Mr. Giebert to give the support of his name to the essence, provided that he would engage to furnish it at a price not exceeding five florins (or 7s. 3d.) per pound (the previous price of the essence of meat of Bavarian manufacture, for hospitals, had been 32s. per pound), and provided that he should be enabled previously to analyse and guarantee its purity.

Baron Liebig was perfectly confident of its success, but he feared that, when once known, the demand would greatly exceed the supply, and that, consequently, competition might raise the price, thereby diminishing the great value of the undertaking as a boon to humanity; and also that through competition adulteration might

be resorted to, and that the essence would be rendered less nutritious and efficacious for the purposes desired.

I immediately brought the subject under the notice of Her Majesty's Government, suggesting that after being duly tested and proved it might be, in a sanitary as well as in an economic sense, of value for our army, navy, and hospitals, and I forwarded samples both of the essence of beef and mutton. The Admiralty had just entered into a contract with a French company to supply for the navy their "Osmazone Glacé," a similar production, but of very inferior quality. After some delay I received from Her Majesty's Government a proposed contract of the Admiralty with Messrs. Giebert & Co. for the supply of "Extractum Carnis Liebig" for the use of Her Majesty's navy. I replied that I learnt from Baron Liebig that the demand of the Zollverein alone for this extract far exceeded the amount which the company could then supply, and that consequently some difficulties might arise with the agent of the company at Antwerp as to the acceptance of a contract for Her Majesty's navy on the terms prescribed. This contract was verbose, complicated, and stringent, and it was reasonable to suppose that if the company could command a market in Germany for their produce on their own terms, they would not subject themselves to conditions of the binding nature contained in the Admiralty contract. I therefore returned the proposed contract, and suggested the desirableness of the Admiralty treating the question directly with M. Bennert, the agent of the company at Antwerp.

It was at this time that Baron Liebig was in communication with official authorities in London in regard to the utilisation of the sewage, for agricultural purposes, of that vast capital, the value of which he estimated at two millions sterling per annum. He observed to me that we had been paying large sums annually for guano—many hundred miles distant—when we had an equally efficient restorer of the soil at our door, of which we made no use, and were at the expense of carrying out to sea to get rid of!

His idea was to collect in various places outside the city the sewage in a liquid form; to raise it by hydraulic power—easily effected and at no great cost—to some elevated spot (he mentioned, among others, Harrow), thence to be conveyed by culverts to the adjacent lands, where it could be utilised at a minimum cost, thus enriching the soil, whilst relieving the city of its impurities. He said that for dairy farms and market gardens it would be of inestimable worth. No deleterious effects could arise from it, as the soil is a deodoriser.

I can never forget the many instructive and pleasant hours I passed with Baron Liebig, or the charm of his conversation, and of the easy and clear manner in which he imparted his vast stock of information. At his death the scientific world lost one of its greatest lights and benefactors.

Professor Hofmann, his former pupil, succeeded to the vacancy caused by the death of Baron Liebig in the scientific world. I was personally acquainted with

him, and often visited his laboratory at Berlin. He was the discoverer of the new colour called "magenta," for which he received a large sum. He also, with his great master, has passed away, but both have left imperishable names in the records of science.

In December, 1865, I was appointed Ambassador at the Court of Prussia, and was summoned to London by Lord Clarendon to confer with him before assuming the duties of my new post, and to kiss hands on my appointment. I had an audience of the King of Bavaria, to present my letters of recall and to take leave of His Majesty. Sir Henry Howard, then Minister at Hanover, was appointed my successor at Munich, where he had previously been an Attaché under Lord Erskine when he first entered the diplomatic career.

I returned to Munich early in January, and after audiences of the Queen-Mother and the other members of the Royal Family, I left the Bavarian capital for my new post on the 13th of February, 1866.

CHAPTER II.

Arrival at Berlin—Interview with Count Bismarck—Audience of King and Queen—Brilliancy of Prussian Court—Conversation with Count Bismarck—Relations with Austria—Bismarck intent on War and Annexation of Elbe Duchies—King Adverse to War—Resultless Exchange of Notes with Austria—Conversation with the King on Lord Clarendon's Suggestion for Mediation—Russia offers good Offices—Joint Proposal of a Congress by England, France, and Russia—Failure of all Mediatory Attempts—Dinner at Court—Remark of Emperor Napoleon to Count Goltz—Prince Napoleon's Visit to Florence—General Govone—Treaty with Italy signed on April 8th—Dispute with Austria enlarged by Addition of Federal Reform—Prussian Representative retires from the Diet—Official Notification by Prussia of Dissolution of Germanic Confederation—Conversation with Bismarck—Attempt on his Life—His Observation to me at Midnight on June 15th—Crown Princess delivered of a Daughter—Royal Christening at Potsdam.

I ARRIVED at Berlin, with Lady Augustus and my family, on the 15th of February; and on the following day had an interview with Count Bismarck, at which I placed in his hands copies of the Queen's letters to the King and Queen of Prussia, accrediting me as Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Court of Berlin.

I requested His Excellency to take their Majesties' commands with reference to my audiences of presentation.

Count Bismarck received me in a very friendly manner, and responded with much sincerity to the wishes of Her Majesty's Government to maintain intimate and friendly relations with Prussia, assuring me of his hearty co-operation and assistance.

My audiences of their Prussian Majesties took place on the 19th of February, in strict accordance with the regulations laid down by the Prussian Court.

Two royal carriages were sent to conduct me and the members of the Embassy to the palace.

A chamberlain waited on me at the hotel, conducted me to the carriage, and accompanied me to the palace.

The Maréchal de Cour, or Hof-Marshal, and a chamberlain received me in the vestibule of the palace, and at the head of the staircase I was met by the Grand Master of the Ceremonies, by whom I was conducted to the saloon where Count Bismarck and General von Alvensleben, the aide-de-camp on duty, were in attendance.

I was presented by Count Bismarck to His Majesty. In delivering the Queen's letter I addressed to the King a few words expressing the deep interest Her Majesty the Queen took in all that concerned the happiness of the King and of his royal house.

His Majesty charged me to convey his grateful sense of Her Majesty's kindness, and his ardent wish that his happy relations with England should ever be maintained inviolate, for the mutual interest of both countries.

His Majesty was pleased to express his satisfaction that I had been selected to represent Her Majesty at his Court, referring in gracious terms to the period when I had been first presented to His Majesty in 1837.

As is customary, I had audiences of all the members of the Prussian Royal Family, to whom I had been

personally known for many years, and who received me most graciously.

I must add, having some knowledge of the Courts of Europe, that there is no Court more brilliantly maintained, and no Court where more courtesy and hospitality are shown to strangers, than that of Prussia.

Every member of a royal house in Europe, on arriving at Berlin, is lodged at the Schloss, and royal carriages and servants are placed at his disposal during his stay. All the expenses of the Court—the appanages of the Royal Family, and the maintenance of the numerous palaces and residences in all parts of the kingdom, always ready for occupation—are kept up by the Sovereign, and are defrayed out of the Crown estates (termed *Kron Fidei Commis*), which are considerable. These revenues are entirely under the administration of the Sovereign, and are independent of Parliament. All the members of the Royal Family receive the dotations appointed to them by the King from the Crown estates without being subjected to any vote or approval of Parliament.

There are also considerable estates belonging to the Prussian Crown which are vested in the “Secundo Genituro” of the royal house. These estates were held for many years, and up to the day of his death, by Prince Charles of Prussia, the King’s next brother. Had Prince Charles outlived the Emperor William, these estates would have passed to Prince Henry, second son of the Emperor Frederick, representing the Secundo Genituro; but as Prince Charles pre-deceased the Emperor William,

they passed to Prince Frederick Charles, his son. These estates were said to give an income of £60,000 to £70,000 a year. I am not certain who has now the enjoyment of them since the death of Prince Frederick Charles, but I believe they have passed to Prince Leopold, his son.

The expenses of the German Emperor must be now very considerable. An addition of one million thalers (or £150,000) was voted to the Emperor in 1871 to cover the additional expenses of the Court. The thrifty and frugal days of Prussia are past. They ended with the death of Frederick William III., who had amassed a very large sum, which he bequeathed to the nation; and I very much doubt that such good fortune will ever again rejoice the heart of a Prussian Minister of Finance.

I found on my arrival at Berlin the political atmosphere very “loaded”—“*Il sentait la poudre,*” as a Frenchman would say. I inquired of Count Bismarck at my first interview how the relations of Prussia and Austria stood, and in what state the negotiations were. Count Bismarck replied with calmness that he considered the negotiations at an end, as also the alliance which had till now existed between the two States.

The impression left on my mind after my interview was that Count Bismarck had determined to make final proposals to Austria for a definitive solution of the Elbe Duchies question, and to force her either into concessions or to war.

He felt that the last stage of the negotiations with Austria had come—that the fruit was ripe, and he was

determined to appropriate it. The only solution commending itself to Count Bismarck was the annexation of the Duchies to Prussia, and he was determined to have them, even at the cost of a war with Austria. He further calculated that, if that war should be successful, it would give to Prussia the supremacy of Germany and possibly the Imperial Crown.

I found the internal question of the differences between the Crown and the representative assembly in regard to the army reorganisation much in the same state as when I left Berlin in 1862. Count Bismarck was not troubled by it, feeling sure that, if successful in his policy, these differences would be condoned and obliterated. It was a bold and daring policy—it was surrounded with danger and difficulties of all kinds—and it required consummate tact and force of will to carry it out successfully.

His difficult task was to bring the King into the same current of opinions with himself, and this could only be effected by the march of events and of time.

Great alarm was now arising in the public feeling from the critical state of the relations between the two great German Powers. It was generally felt that a war with Austria would be a fratricidal war. It deeply affected the feelings of the Queen-Dowager of Prussia, who was sister of the Archduchess Sophie, mother of the Emperor Franz Josef; and every attempt was made, every influence with the King was set in motion, to avert it.

The King, by nature chivalrous and humane, was

verse to war and all its concomitant horrors ; but there were moments when the recollections of Olmütz flitted before His Majesty, and reminded him of the humiliation which had been inflicted on Prussia by Prince Schwarzenberg. The King was also imbued with a feeling that it was the destiny of Prussia to carry out the national desire for unity and to become the leading power in Germany.

It must also be borne in mind that for four years the King and his Government had been in constitutional conflict with his Parliament on the army reorganisation, and that the expenses caused thereby had been continuously refused by the Lower House.

Things had come to a deadlock, and no doubt Count Bismarck, in view of the internal difficulties, looked to some external triumph in the hopes of acquiring the support of the nation.

At this time—probably with a view to bring matters to a crisis—a Prussian Note was despatched to Vienna, stating that the existing provisional state in the Elbe Duchies, fostered by the intrigues and the opposition of the Augustenburg party, could no longer be tolerated—that Prince Frederick of Augustenburg must retire. It invited Austria to come to an understanding with Prussia for a definitive solution, stating that no territorial compensation could be given by Prussia for the cession of Holstein, but that the cession of the Austrian rights would be largely indemnified in money.

The tone of this Note was moderate and conciliatory,

but firm, evincing a determination to expel Prince Frederick from Holstein at any price.

I was informed that the King had expressed himself in forcible language, saying he was quite exasperated, and that the state of affairs could no longer be tolerated. His Majesty concluded by saying, "*Je ne veux pas la guerre, mais j'espère que l'Autriche entendra raison.*"

The reply of the Austrian Government to the Prussian Note, in more measured terms conveyed a direct refutation of the accusations of Prussia, and a decided refusal to admit of the right of Prussian intervention in the government of the Duchy of Holstein.

Shortly after Count Karolyi, the Austrian Ambassador, had an interview with Count Bismarck, when he informed the Prussian Minister-President, in the most decided language, that the Imperial Cabinet, although ready to listen to any conciliatory proposals, were fully determined not to yield to any threats or intimidation, and to hold strictly to the terms of the Gastein Convention and to the rights which it conferred.

No further advance was made on either side ; there was a pause—a respite from further action. It was believed that the King was anxious to receive a report from Count Goltz at Paris as to the attitude of the Emperor Napoleon. He had been instructed to address himself personally to the Emperor Napoleon—(and not to M. Drouyn de Lhuys, then French Minister for Foreign Affairs, who was regarded as a partisan of Austria)—to

ascertain his intention in the event of a war with Austria.

In the meantime Count Bismarck addressed a confidential despatch to the German allies of Prussia, informing them of the grave crisis in the relations between the two German Powers, and warning them that the outbreak of a serious conflict with Austria was only a question of time (*“der Ausbruch eines ersten Conflict mit Oesterreich ist nur eine Frage der Zeit”*).

In this critical state of affairs I received the following letter from Lord Clarendon, dated Foreign Office, March 7th, 1866:—

You may easily suppose that the state of things between Prussia and Austria occupies men's minds, and creates the greatest uneasiness respecting the calamities which a civil war in Germany would entail upon Europe.

Many people think that Prussia will not push matters to extremities, and that Austria will, at the last moment, yield; but I am not of the number. The despatches which Count Apponyi has read to me, and the language he has been instructed to hold, leave me little doubt that Austria will face war rather than the humiliation which Prussia seeks to inflict upon her; and in adopting that course I think she is perfectly right. A disastrous war is better than voluntary disgrace. But in the name of all that is rational, decent, and humane, what can be the justification of war on the part of Prussia? She cannot possibly plead her desire for territorial aggrandisement, and she cannot with truth say that the administration of Holstein by the Austrian authorities has been of a kind to constitute a *casus belli*, although Bernstorff has just told me that the licence allowed in Holstein by General Gablenz, and the hostile articles of newspapers under the inspiration of Austria, have produced a state of things intolerable to Prussia; that it must be put

an end to by war, if no other means for the purpose can be devised or are assented to by Austria.

I wish you would take an opportunity of saying to M. de Bismarck that we purposely abstain from making any official communication upon the present state of affairs, but that as we desire to preserve the most friendly relations with Prussia, we earnestly beg of him to pause before he embarks in a war of which no man can foresee the results or the termination.

It is impossible that any *well-founded* complaints which Prussia may have against Austria should not be capable of being settled by negotiation; and if ever there was a case calling for the sort of arbitration—or, rather, of reference to a friendly Power—which, to the credit of humanity and the civilisation of our age, was agreed upon at Paris in 1856, it is the case which has arisen between the two great German Powers.

It would reflect great credit upon Prussia if, before she went out in this duel with Austria, she volunteered to place herself in the hands of seconds upon whose impartiality she could rely, and with whom her honour would be in safe keeping.

I well know how properly tenacious the King is of the honour of Prussia and of his army; and if I thought that either would be affected by such a course of proceeding, I would not suggest it, or, indeed, any other course which would be liable to objection and refusal.

I know not upon what means of resistance Austria can reckon, or what support she would find in Southern Germany, but I am sure that any greivous injury to her, such as would destroy the present equilibrium of power, would be a misfortune for the rest of Europe, and as such would be resented—in fact, the more the question is considered, the more certain it seems that Prussia will array against her the public opinion of Europe, as an aggressive and unreasonable Power; and we have no wish for that. Setting aside family ties, Prussia is the great Protestant Power of Europe, with which we naturally have kindred feelings, and it would be with deep regret that we should see her regarded as a common enemy, because a wilful

disturber, of the peace of Europe; and still more if, in the course of events, we found ourselves compelled to take any part against her.

Pray submit these various considerations to M. de Bismarck as friendly and confidential, and offered without intention to interfere with the policy of Prussia, but not concealing, as a friend ought not to conceal, our opinion upon the disastrous consequences to ourselves, as well as to others, which may ensue from that policy being carried beyond the limits of absolute necessity.

I had an interview with Count Bismarck on the 11th of March, when I read to him, unofficially, the chief portion of the above letter I had received from Lord Clarendon.

Count Bismarck begged me to express his thanks to Lord Clarendon for his kindly communication and his friendly interest for Prussia. He said that he meditated no act of violence: that the position now was simply that the alliance between Austria and Prussia was at an end. "I might," said His Excellency, "use the words of Richelieu to his discarded mistress: '*Nous ne sommes pas ennemis: mais nous ne nous aimons plus.*'" He then entered into a list of grievances against Austria—her faithlessness, her duplicity, her selfishness—observing that if Prussia had been a co-partner with Austria in acquiring possession of a province contiguous to Austria, and of importance to her interests, but distant from Prussia, and of no intrinsic value to her, she (Prussia) would have acted a different part, and would have taken into account the interests of her ally.

Count Bismarck disclaimed any propensity or desire for war. He wished for peace, and above all for peace with Austria and Germany; but, in his opinion, there were no means of deciding the differences with Austria but by the sword, and the present was the most favourable opportunity for doing so—an opportunity which might not occur again for a century.

A few days later Count Bismarck gave a large party, at which the King, Queen, and Court were present. To this opportunity I was indebted for a conversation with His Majesty.

The King commenced by referring to the letter I had received from Lord Clarendon, which I had read to Count Bismarck. I told the King that Her Majesty's Government were much disquieted by the turn which affairs had taken between Prussia and Austria; that Her Majesty's Government, since the Conference of London, had abstained from all interference in the affairs of the Elbe Duchies; but that from general report it was to be feared a conflict there might arise between the two German Powers. Such an eventuality, I observed, would be a serious calamity for Germany—for Europe—and that, consequently, animated by a friendly and amicable feeling, Her Majesty's Government would be willing to use their good offices if they could tend to a satisfactory and peaceful arrangement of the differences.

The King admitted that a war between the two German Powers would be a serious calamity for both. He said that it had been his constant

wish and aim to concert and to go hand-in-hand with Austria in the question of the Elbe Duchies, that at Gastein he had cordially and sincerely expressed this wish, and that he had then hoped a firm and durable foundation had been given to the alliance. Austria had, however, taken a different course: she had constantly thwarted the Prussian views and policy, and for some time past had exhibited an unfriendly feeling towards Prussia. This state of things must, said His Majesty, cease.

To these remarks I could only answer that I thought much exaggeration existed on this subject, for I could not believe that, situated as Austria was, it could be either her interest, her policy, or her wish to break up an alliance which was of such importance to both States. I said that, without entering into their mutual grievances and reclamations, I could not consider, nor did Her Majesty's Government consider, that these could form any valid basis for war between the two States; and I referred to the article of the Treaty of Paris in 1856, in which the several Powers agreed, before resorting to war, to submit their differences to arbitration, or the good offices of a third Power. I said that the present case appeared to be one which called for the application of this wise and humane course. The King replied, after some little reflection, "*Quant à moi je ne desire pas pousser les choses à l'extrémité.*" I asked the King whether I was authorised by His Majesty to report this reply to Her Majesty's Government. The King assented, and expressed a hope that

in this mode means might be found for a satisfactory and pacific arrangement.

I stated to the King that Her Majesty's Government were most desirous of maintaining good relations with Prussia, that the two countries had kindred feelings and common interests, and that there should exist between them the most cordial understanding, the only rivalry being that of promoting whatever tended to the increase of the wealth and the prosperity of the two nations. I assured the King that Her Majesty's Government would be prepared to act the most friendly and impartial part, and would be happy to aid in the cause of peace, and in restoring harmonious relations between Prussia and Austria.

His Majesty thanked me for these expressions, and said he was fully assured of their sincerity. He then shook me cordially by the hand, and the conversation ended.

His Majesty spoke to the Crown Prince on the following day, referring to the conversation he had had with me, and to the suggestion of submitting the differences with Austria to the good offices of a third Power, and His Majesty asked the Crown Prince to write to the Queen to submit the proposal to Her Majesty, and to ask Her Majesty to undertake the mediation, to which His Royal Highness gladly and readily assented.

Thinking it important that there should be no misapprehension on the part of Count Bismarck as to the nature of the suggestions which I had submitted to the

King, I read to him that part of the Despatch from Lord Clarendon which stated, "that in expressing a hope that Prussia, before going to war, would bear in mind the agreement entered into at the Congress of Paris to refer disputed questions to a friendly Power, Her Majesty's Government were far from desiring to indicate that England should be the Power selected for that purpose; but if the King of Prussia should think fit to ask for the good offices of Her Majesty's Government, they will be given, in conjunction, if possible, with other Powers, with a conscientious desire to maintain the peace of Europe." Count Bismarck merely replied that we should address ourselves to Vienna, for Austria was the party who threatened to be the disturber of the peace.

Count Bismarck also agreed to write to Count Bernstorff on the same subject; but the idea, although favourably responded to, fell through, and I think that Lord Clarendon, foreseeing it would be a hopeless task, did not regret being relieved of it.

On the 2nd of March there was a large dinner at the King's palace in honour of the Grand Duke and Duchess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, to which Lady Augustus and I, with the French Ambassador, M. Benedetti, and his wife, were invited. The King was very gay, and did not wear an appearance of care. His Majesty was gifted with the rare faculty of casting off momentarily all care and anxiety of mind, and of evincing his usual gaiety and amiability. No one could judge of the state of the political atmosphere by the King's external demeanour.

Count Benedetti, the French Ambassador to the Court of Berlin, had seen Count Goltz, the Prussian Ambassador at Paris, who was returning to his post. He told Benedetti that his lips were sealed, and he could say nothing on the absorbing topic of the moment—and Benedetti said to me that he had written this to M. Drouyn de Lhuys—observing that Count Goltz *avait la bouche enfarinée*, and that he could find out nothing as to the intentions of Prussia.

The hopes entertained by the King's favourable view of the suggestion to refer the differences with Austria to the good offices of a third Power, to which mention has been made above, were not destined to be long-lived—they vanished under the withering influence of Count Bismarck, who, however, turned the opportunity to account (as Lord Clarendon wrote me on the 28th of March), "in proving not that peace was desirable, but that the atrocities of Austria required the chastisement of war." It was a curious admission, adds Lord Clarendon, that he extracted from Count Bernstorff—"of the immediate disappearance of all grievances if Austria would retire quickly from Holstein, and no longer oppose the annexation of the Duchies by Prussia."

On the return of Count Goltz to Paris the Emperor Napoleon told him that he was sincerely desirous hostilities should not break out, but that he could give no advice in the matter, and would only recommend Prussia not to be the aggressor. Prince Napoleon, with the Emperor's full consent, went to Florence to dissuade General La Marmora from the Prussian

Alliance, adding that there "was a better chance of getting Venetia by holding aloof."

There were at this time so many undercurrents and intrigues in process that it was very difficult to ascertain the truth. The arrival at Berlin of General Govone, an Italian officer, caused some surprise and suspicions. He stated to me that the object of his visit was to inquire into the merits of the Prussian military system, and more especially of the Prussian needle-gun, and he professed to have no other object.

It would have been better if he had maintained silence as to the object of his visit, for it was not usual for inquiries on subjects of a merely technical nature to be undertaken by an officer of such high military rank; nor, indeed, could he suppose that I could be ignorant of the real object of his visit.

The question of an alliance between Prussia and Italy against Austria had already occupied the attention of both Governments, previous to the Convention between the two German Powers at Gastein in 1865, when the Italian Government had incurred military expenses for a co-operation with Prussia, but, in consequence of the Gastein Convention, was suddenly left by her in the lurch.

The Italian Government, of which General La Marmora was President, was, therefore, rather distrustful of Prussia, and afraid that if the two German Powers were to come to an agreement, Italy would be thrown overboard, and exposed to the ill-will and resentment of Austria.

The negotiations were protracted, as the Italian Government would enter into no agreement unless Prussia bound herself to declare war against Austria within a fixed period from the date of the Treaty. The Treaty was finally signed at Berlin, on the 8th of April, by Count Bismarck and Count Barral, the Italian Ambassador to Berlin, and three months were fixed for the commencement of hostilities.

During these negotiations Count Benedetti, the French Ambassador, evinced great activity in behalf of Italy. Being a Corsican by birth, his patriotism led him to espouse the cause of Italian unity and independence, and he was probably the more anxious and ready to do so knowing they were the sentiments of his Imperial master.

Every attempt to preserve peace between the two German Powers proved unavailing, being thwarted and rejected by Count Bismarck. The Emperor of Russia proffered his good offices, which were accepted, but they proved only the impracticability of establishing harmony between Austria and Prussia. An European Conference was proposed jointly by England, France, and Russia; but it foundered at once, when the basis of the negotiations for the Conference to treat could not be previously agreed upon, Austria declining, unless it was distinctly understood that no territorial changes were to be effected, to the benefit of any of the Powers concerned.

But the question was no longer now confined to the Elbe Duchies. It had assumed much larger proportions.

Count Bismarck had determined to go in for the whole German question. He said to me: "We should never go to war for the Duchies. One Duchy we have, and we do not intend to give it up. It would be folly to go to war to acquire a territory with a population of only 500,000, when half that number might possibly be sacrificed to obtain it."

Count Bismarck intended to bid for the supremacy of Germany, to the entire exclusion of Austria; and it was for this purpose that, on retiring from the Diet at Frankfort, he launched a Prussian Circular to the several Governments of the Confederation on "Federal Reform," and submitted a proposal for the immediate convocation of a German Parliament by universal suffrage.

There were no real grounds nor justification for war between Austria and Prussia as regarded the question of the Elbe Duchies. Their differences could have been settled by the good offices of a third Power up to March, 1866, when they assumed larger proportions. So much was this the case that the French Ambassador, Count Benedetti, whose language had always been uniform and decided against the policy of M. de Bismarck, said to me, "*Je défie à M. de Bismarck d'arriver au champ de bataille.*"

On his return to Paris in March, 1866, Count Goltz, the Prussian Ambassador, was charged to deliver the order of the Black Eagle to the Prince Imperial. The Emperor Napoleon, on receiving it, might have applied the classical citation—"Timeo Danaos, et dona

ferentes." The motto of that Order was "Suum Cuique," which precept might have been advantageously recommended to Count Bismarck. On the 24th of March I reported to Lord Clarendon as follows:—

M. de Bismarck was good enough to read to me an important Circular-Despatch he had addressed to the Prussian representatives at the several German Courts on the differences which had arisen between Austria and Prussia on the question of the Elbe Duchies. It commenced by stating that Prussia had hoped and expected that the Convention of Gastein would have afforded a durable and firm basis for the alliance between the two States. It pointed out that in December, 1865, the policy of Austria in Holstein assumed another direction, and evinced an attitude of opposition to the interests and rightful expectations of Prussia.

By the Treaty of Vienna, which was subsequently followed by the Convention of Gastein, the two Powers had entered into possession of the Elbe Duchies. Austria had, at the outset of the conflict with Denmark, recognised the legal rights of the King of Denmark to the sovereignty of those Duchies. Those rights by treaty were assigned to the two German Powers. But Austria, in violation of her engagements, now recognised the rights of a third Pretender, in the person of the Prince of Augustenburg.

Early in January, 1866, Prussia found herself called upon to address certain reclamations to Austria, and to request her to co-operate with Prussia in redressing the grievances complained of. The Prussian Despatch was couched in the most friendly and conciliatory language. To this Despatch Austria replied in a dry and negative manner. Since then no communication whatever had been exchanged between the two Courts.

M. de Bismarck then proceeds to show that, although the intimate alliance between the two States was at an end, their position was far removed from a state of war. All that he

had stated to Count Karolyi, the Austrian Ambassador, on that occasion, was that they had reverted to the state of relations which had existed previous to the Danish War, and that henceforth, the intimacy having ceased, they would be on the same footing as Prussia was with any other European State. There was no intention on the part of Prussia to engage in a war for the Duchy of Holstein. The *status quo* could have lasted for years if the Convention of Gastein had been faithfully observed by Austria.

Count Bismarck then endeavours to prove that the alarm of war and the appeal to arms has solely emanated from Austria, who had made, and was continuing to make, extensive armaments and military preparations, of which a special account was given in an annexed document. During this time and up to this date Count Bismarck asserts that Prussia had not moved a man, nor made the smallest military preparation.

But (he continues to say) Prussia cannot see her frontier menaced without providing for its safety against attack, and she cannot permit herself to be in the position in which she was placed in 1850, when unarmed she found herself in the face of 130,000 Austrians.

The foregoing, as far as my recollection goes, is the summary of the Circular-Despatch referred to. It was read to me in German by Count Bismarck, but His Excellency stated to me that a copy in French would be communicated to your lordship.

It is evident that this Despatch was intended to prepare Foreign Governments for the mobilisation of the Prussian Army, and to justify it in the eyes of Europe by representing Austria as the Power seeking war, while Prussia, in passive tranquillity, was anxious for peace.

AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

The Earl of Clarendon, K.G.

I have given this Despatch in detail as showing that none of the grievances alleged against Austria was incapable of being amicably arranged by the mediation

of a third Power if Count Bismarck had really desired peace; and as showing, with other circumstantial evidence, that his real object was not simply the annexation of the Elbe Duchies, but a conflict with Austria, which, if successful, would place Prussia at the head of Germany.

On another occasion, in referring to the suggestion of asking the good offices of a third Power to arrange the differences between Austria and Prussia, a suggestion which had been favourably received by the King, Count Bismarck said that "Prussia was not the initiator of a warlike tendency—you should apply to Vienna. Prussia had not moved a man, nor made any military preparation for war. Austria was the threatening Power. She was assembling her troops, and concentrating them on the Silesian frontier. She would attack us when ready for the fray. What would you do," inquired His Excellency, "if you found a violent, dangerous man in the street threatening the public security and peace?" I replied "that I should immediately call the police, and in my estimation the Great Powers constituted the police of Europe, for the maintenance of peace." "But," said Count Bismarck, "if it was the case of a gentleman, you would give him your card." I replied, "*I think not.*"

It was evident to me that Count Bismarck had expected to have carried out his project of the annexation of the Elbe Duchies without war. But when he found a determined resistance on the part of Austria, and that he could only purchase this triumph of Prussian policy at the cost of a war, he then considered

that if war became requisite to carry out his designs, the end would not be commensurate with the cost and dangers of the enterprise. Consequently he found it necessary to enlarge the area of his ambitious projects, and, by raising the whole German question, to aspire to, if successful, the acquirement for Prussia of the "*Suzeraineté*" of the whole of Northern Germany, reaching to the Main. When I say "*Suzeraineté*," I mean it to imply the sole direction of the military power and the diplomatic representation of Northern Germany, without infringing in other respects on the rights of the several Sovereigns. The question, therefore, for Austria was not alone a concession of rights in Holstein, but whether, by thus aggrandising Prussia, she was not feeding that appetite for aggression and aggrandisement which, in the end, would be directed against herself. The real question at stake between Austria and Prussia was for the supremacy in Germany; and whether it was for the acquisition of the Elbe Duchies, or for a reform of the Federal Diet, the cause was the same, and must, sooner or later, have been brought to an issue.

It was a grand idea—a bold and daring venture—worthy of a great statesman and a zealous patriot. As to the honesty of the policy and the *modus operandi*, a different opinion may exist.

On the Convention of Gastein being declared by Bismarck as no longer existent, the Austrian troops of occupation in Holstein withdrew.

The Diet then voted the mobilisation of all the Federal forces; and in reply thereto, Prussia declared

that the Germanic Confederation was at an end, and leaving the Prussian proposal for Federal Reform as a legacy to the Diet the Prussian representative left Frankfort.

Thus expired, after forty-five years of an uneventful and barren life, an institution which its creator, Prince Metternich, had prophesied to me, in 1858, would be the salvation of Europe! A salutary warning not to foretell the stability of political institutions.

The Prussian Government, immediately after the vote of the Diet decreeing the mobilisation of all the Federal forces, informed the European Powers that the Germanic Confederation was broken up, and ceased to exist from the 14th of June, 1866.

I may observe that the last occasion on which the representatives of the German States forming the Germanic Confederation appeared officially was at the full-dress banquet which I gave on the Queen's birthday, on the 24th of May, 1866.

In talking to me on the subject of peace or war, Bismarck observed—"Why, after all, Attila was a greater man than your Mr. John Bright. He has left a greater name in history. The Duke of Wellington will be known in history as a great warrior, and not as a pacific statesman."

In declaring to the Diet, in the name of the King of Prussia, that the Federal Treaty had been broken by the above-named vote of the Diet, and was no longer binding on its members, but considered as dissolved, the Prussian representative stated that his Government

were ready to form another union, on a different basis, with those Governments who were disposed to join.

An incident occurred at Berlin on the 7th of May which caused a great sensation, but happily it was not attended with fatal effect. A young man fired five shots out of a revolver at Count Bismarck, in broad day, as he was returning along Unter den Linden, from the King's palace. The assailant was a young student. It was no "momentary aberration of intellect," no sudden mania, which stimulated Ferdinand Cohen's attempt on Bismarck's life. Cohen was the stepson of Carl Blind, a notorious democratic fugitive from Baden, who had fled to England, and whose name Cohen had taken. Cohen, like Blind, was a Red Republican, and he had journeyed to Berlin with the fixed deliberate intent of killing Bismarck, as the arch-enemy of liberty. It is marvellous how Count Bismarck escaped. The last two shots would certainly have proved fatal had not the power of the shot been weakened by the muzzle of the revolver having been almost embedded in the cloth of his coat. Two bullets penetrated Bismarck's clothes, but did not pierce a silk under-vest.

Immediately on his arrest, by Count Bismarck himself, who gave him into the charge of a company of the Second Regiment of Guards passing at the moment, Cohen was conducted to the nearest police office, where an examination commenced in the presence of the civil authorities. During a short pause, whilst the accused was sitting on a bench, he raised his handkerchief (in which a knife was concealed) to his head, and whilst

apparently occupied in wiping his forehead, he managed to inflict a deep wound in his throat. Notwithstanding immediate medical treatment, he died of his wound a few hours afterwards.

Lord Clarendon, in requesting me to express his congratulations to Count Bismarck on his miraculous escape from assassination, observed that he had shown great personal courage. "It had," said Lord Clarendon, "made a great impression in England and elsewhere, which, as the assailant had happily failed in his murderous attempt, would, no doubt, greatly add to Count Bismarck's prestige and his power."

The die was now cast. There was no retreat, and the rivalry of the two German Powers for supremacy in Germany was to be decided by the sword.

I was with Count Bismarck late on the evening of June 15th. We had been walking and sitting in his garden till a late hour, when, to my astonishment, it struck midnight. Count Bismarck took out his watch, and said, "*À l'heure qu'il est nos troupes sont entrées en Hanovre, Saxe, et Hesse-Cassel.*" He added, "The struggle will be severe. Prussia may lose, but she will, at all events, have fought bravely and honourably. If we are beaten," Count Bismarck said, "I shall not return here. I shall fall in the last charge. One can but die once; and if beaten, it is better to die."

The King gave his assent to the war with great reluctance. He was naturally of a benevolent and humane nature, and was greatly influenced by the Queen-Dowager and the members of his family in

opposition to it. It was represented to him as a fratricidal war—a war of Germans against their German brethren, thus possibly sowing the seeds of animosity and hatred which might not be extinguished for generations. He felt deeply the responsibilities of his position, and of guarding the honour of his army and his people. He felt also that his private feelings ought not to overcome his public duties and the welfare of his country. Neither could he have underrated the disunion then existing in Germany, which was producing dissatisfaction at home and weakness abroad. He resisted for a long time the ambitious projects of his Minister, who had been continually working on his sensitive mind, until gradually he had advanced too far to retreat with honour; and the ambitious Minister, with an iron will, at last overcame all opposition.

I may here state that when the treaty between Prussia and Italy was signed, in April, 1866, it became immediately known at Vienna, through the Emperor Napoleon. The Emperor of Austria then offered to cede Venetia to Italy, through the medium of the Emperor Napoleon, in exchange for Italy's neutrality in the coming war. Had the offer been made before the signature of the treaty, the distrust then entertained of Prussia would probably have induced General La Marmora to accept it. But it was too late, and he was too honourable a man to violate his pledge. How often has Austria suffered from that inauspicious phrase "*too late*"! Had she exercised common

foresight, the fortune of war might have decided otherwise, and she would in that event have maintained her position in Germany.

Not being competent to express an opinion on military strategy, I am unable to confirm the value of the reports then in circulation. After the battle of Königgrätz it was said that if the 80,000 Bavarian troops, which had been destined for the support of Austria, under the command of Prince Charles of Bavaria, had taken up their position on the left flank of the Austrian army, the result of that battle might have been different, and the whole aspect of the war changed. It may be fortunate for Europe, and even for Austria, that this did not take place. The war might not then have been localised or of short duration.*

On the 14th of April the Crown Princess was happily delivered of a daughter, and I signed, with Baron Schleinitz, the Minister of the Royal House, the usual protocol recording the birth. The health of the Crown Princess and infant Princess continued to be most satisfactory.

* But I afterwards learnt that this was incorrect. Instead of 80,000 men, the Bavarian army consisted of but 50,000 men. Its strategy was directed from Vienna, and the instructions were that it—which constituted the 7th Federal Corps—along with the 8th Federal Corps, commanded by Prince Alexander of Hesse, should not join Benedek, but operate a diversion against the Prussian Rhine provinces. The two Federal corps were opposed on the Main by the Prussian “Army of the Main” under General Vogel von Falkenstein. On the day of Königgrätz they were some 300 miles distant from that field; and on July 4th, the day after Königgrätz, they were fighting with Falkenstein at Wiesenthal on the Felde.

The King and Queen immediately went to Potsdam, and seeing me on the railway platform, the King graciously invited me into his carriage.

The royal christening was fixed to take place on the 24th of May—the birthday of Her Majesty our gracious Queen—at the New Palais, Potsdam.

CHAPTER III.

Election of Prince Charles of Hohenzollern as Hospodar of Roumania—Prussian Government disavowed all Participation in It—The Final Result proved very Satisfactory—Marriage of Prince Ferdinand of Hohenzollern in 1893, Heir to the Crown of Roumania, with Princess Marie of Edinburgh—Funeral of Prince Sigismund—Manifesto of King of Prussia—Operations of the War in Hanover and Hesse-Cassel—Terms of Capitulation of the King of Hanover—Neutrality of England—Observations that English Neutrality should be Conditional—Fall of Earl Russell's Ministry—Resignation of Lord Clarendon—His Loss to the Country—Departure of the King, Count Bismarck, and General von Moltke on June 30th for the Seat of War—Decisive Prussian Victory at Königgrätz on July 3rd—Observations on the Policy of France—Lord Clarendon's Letter announcing that the Queen had conferred on me the G.C.B.

THE election of a Prince as ruler of the united provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia was now occupying the attention of the European Governments, although it was greatly overshadowed by the critical relations of Austria and Prussia.

Count Bismarck being indisposed, I had an interview with M. de Thile, Under-Secretary of State, and inquired as to the truth of the reported election of Prince Charles of Hohenzollern as ruler of those provinces.

M. de Thile stated that the Prussian Government had been taken by surprise by his election, that they regarded the question as being one of a purely private nature, and that they would not be mixed up with it. He further stated that the deputation which

had been sent to Paris by the Government of the provinces had appealed to Count Goltz, the Prussian Ambassador there, suggesting the candidature of Prince Charles of Hohenzollern. Receiving no satisfactory reply, it had then repaired to Düsseldorf, and had laid the matter before his father, Prince Antoine. On further reference of the subject to Count Bismarck, he had discountenanced the idea, and had declined, on the part of the Government, to give any support to the proposed candidature.

I subsequently had a conversation on the subject with Aristarchi Bey, the Turkish Ambassador. He told me that he had received pressing instructions from his Government to urge the Prussian Government to prevent the acceptance of the proffered honour by Prince Charles.

He had taken, accordingly, the necessary steps in the above sense, and had received positive assurances through M. de Thile from Count Bismarck that, first, "The Prussian Government neither had been nor were interested in the election of Prince Charles of Hohenzollern; second, that the King [of Prussia] would not receive the Moldo-Wallachian deputation, which was daily expected at Berlin to offer the Hospodariat to Prince Charles, nor would His Majesty permit Prince Charles to receive it at Berlin; and third, that the King would not grant his permission to Prince Charles to accept the Hospodariat unless it should meet with the approval and sanction of the Conference of the Great Powers at Paris."

Aristarchi Bey expressed himself as satisfied with these assurances, although they had not entirely fulfilled the wishes of his Government that the King should positively forbid the Prince to accept the proffered dignity. In the meantime the Prince, who was of a determined and energetic character, and who did not wish in any way to compromise the King or his Government, obtained six months' leave of absence as a Prussian officer, and started off at once, with a carpet bag for his luggage, and arrived at the Wallachian frontier. He was thence invited to Bucharest, where he met the deputation, and formally agreed to accept their offer.

I may here cursorily state that a bloodless revolution had taken place at Bucharest. In 1861 the two provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia had been united under the government of Colonel (or Prince) Couza, who had been elected as Hospodar of both provinces. In February, 1866, an armed body went to his palace, took him prisoner, and forced from him his abdication. His Ministers were also arrested. The new Ministry informed the foreign representatives of what had occurred; and the Count of Flanders was unanimously elected Hospodar of Roumania, the new title assumed by the united provinces.

No disturbance took place, and the election of the Count of Flanders gave general satisfaction. The Count of Flanders, however, declined the position. Some movement was made in favour of the Duke of Leuchtenberg, a relative of the Emperor of Russia, but it was not supported. The National Assembly (styled the

Sobranje) was convened, and it was determined to offer the Hospodariat to Prince Charles of Hohenzollern.

I do not think that either the King or Count Bismarck were at all desirous of seeing a member of the Hohenzollern family as Chief of Roumania. They could not wish at that moment to displease the Emperor of Russia, and they were further anxious to avoid any complications which might later result from the acceptance by Prince Charles of the Roumanian dignity. It was his own act, and he would have to abide the consequences of it. The King of Prussia was not pleased with the acceptance of the Hospodariat by Prince Charles of Hohenzollern, and viewed it as an act of insubordination towards him. But why, then, did His Majesty give him six months' leave of absence at a moment when every other officer was at his post?

With a view to placing the election of Prince Charles of Hohenzollern as Hospodar of the united Principalities in legal conformity with existing treaties and the resolution of the Conference at Paris, the Provisional Government of the Principalities offered to naturalise the Prince of Hohenzollern—father of Prince Charles—as a Roumanian subject. His Royal Highness applied to the King for permission to accept the offer. His Majesty, on the joint advice of Count Bismarck and Baron Schleinitz, Minister of the Royal House, through whom the application was made, decided to refuse the permission to the Prince, on the grounds that his assent might be misinterpreted, and might compromise him in regard to the election of Prince Charles, who retired

from the Prussian army with the permission of the King.

The result, however, has proved very satisfactory. Roumania has become a kingdom, and Prince Charles, made King of Roumania in 1878, has governed wisely and happily for his country. Unfortunately, he had only one child (a daughter, who died early in life) by his wife, who was the daughter of the Prince and Princess of Neu Wied, with whom we were personally acquainted. The late Prince of Wied was then in very delicate health, and came to Baden-Baden to recruit it, during which time the devoted attentions to him of the Princess were ceaseless. We used to see much of the young Princess. She was very charming in every way—very intellectual, but had not then developed her great poetical talents.

While I am writing these lines (1893) the marriage of Prince Ferdinand of Hohenzollern, nephew of the King Charles and heir to the Crown of Roumania, to the daughter of the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh, is about to be solemnised at Sigmaringen. Prince Ferdinand of Hohenzollern is a son of Prince and Princess Hohenzollern, the latter a sister of the late King of Portugal, and in beauty and attainments one of the most charming Princesses in Europe. This marriage has been received with universal applause, and augurs a happy and prosperous future for the Roumanian people. The Princess Marie being a granddaughter of our gracious Queen and a niece of the Emperor of Russia, this marriage forms another link in the chain of the family ties between England and Russia. May it also

tend to maintain and strengthen their amity and goodwill!

In the early part of June, when the proposed Congress fell through, in consequence of the impossible conditions raised by Austria, as a last resource to maintain peace, private attempts were made by influential personages to bring about a direct understanding between Austria and Prussia. These attempts, which were made by the King through the Queen-Dowager (who was sister to the Archduchess Sophie, mother of the Emperor Franz Josef), without the participation of Count Bismarck, met with so little cordiality and good-feeling on the part of Austria that the King was now convinced that Austria wished for war, and that there remained no other alternative for him but to accept it. This was confirmed by an observation made by Baron Beust, the Saxon Premier, when reference was made to the possibility of a pacific arrangement by mutual concession. "*Le vin,*" said Baron Beust, "*est tiré, il faut le boire.*" The King was deeply mortified by the manner in which his attempts in behalf of peace had been met, and His Majesty became as warlike as previously he had been pacifically disposed.

The offers then made to Austria were the following :—

1. That the Duchies should be erected into an independent State, either under a Prussian Prince or under the Grand Duke of Oldenburg.
2. That concessions with respect to Kiel and a maritime harbour should be made to Prussia.
3. That the two Great Powers should agree to divide the

Hegemonie of Germany—the North accruing to Prussia, the South to Austria.

4. That a considerable pecuniary indemnity should be paid to Austria for the expenses of the liberation of the Duchies.

The Emperor Franz Josef was reported to me as recognising that these terms were very advantageous to Austria, but he declined to accept them, stating that “he could not abandon his allies in Germany and sacrifice the Federal rights and obligations to which he was bound.”

Thus ended all the earnest endeavours of the neutral Powers, and the confidential steps taken by the King himself to effect an amicable understanding between the two Powers in order to avert war, the duration and the results of which no one could foresee. The die was cast, and there were no other means of deciding the question at issue but by the sword.

The financial embarrassments of Austria rendered it almost impossible for her to await the issue of a Congress, from which she had less to hope for than from the results of a successful campaign.

Prussia was likewise impatient for a decision, as since the mobilisation the extra cost of her army was £50,000 sterling per day.

The Crown Prince left Berlin on the 8th of June to take command of the Second Army, with his headquarters at Fürstenstein in Silesia, a château of Prince Pless. Prince Frederick Charles left at the same time to take command of the First Army in Prussian Saxony.

Prince Albert (father) and Prince Albert (son) also

left to take up their respective commands—the former to command a cavalry corps, the latter a brigade of cavalry.

On the 22nd of June, 1866, I attended the funeral of Prince Sigismund, third son of the Crown Prince and Princess, who had peacefully passed to his rest on the 18th of June, aged twenty-one months.

There was something more than usually affecting in this melancholy scene. The assembling of the mournful procession at the New Palais contrasting so vividly with the recollections of the gay crowd which four weeks previously had met at the same palace on the festive occasion of the royal christening; the venerable Field-Marshal Wrangel, eighty-two years of age, following on foot and bareheaded to the early tomb of the Royal Prince of twenty-one months; the sad cause which detained his royal parent from his home at such a moment, and prevented him from paying this last tribute of love to his beloved child, gave an affecting solemnity to the occasion. These reflections must have forcibly impressed the minds of all participating in this mournful ceremony, and have filled their hearts with the deepest sympathy for the royal parents in their sad affliction.

The Prussian forces advancing into Austria were divided into three armies:—The First Army, of about 100,000 men, under the command of Prince Frederick Charles, with General von Voigts-Retz as Chief of the Staff. The Second Army—the Silesian—of about 116,000 men, under the command of the Crown Prince, with

General von Blumenthal as Chief of the Staff. The Third Army—the Elbe—of about 40,000 men, under the command of General Herwarth von Bittenfeld—all together about 256,000 men destined for Saxony and Bohemia.

There were also three other divisions—one at Minden, one in Holstein, and one near Wetzlar, which latter formed about 50,000 men, and was termed the Main army, which was commanded by General Vogel von Falkenstein, and was intended to operate against the troops of the South German States in alliance with Austria, under the chief command of Prince Charles of Bavaria. He commanded the 7th and 8th Federal Corps, of which the former was the Bavarian Army, the latter the contingents of Würtemberg, Hesse, Baden, etc., under Prince Alexander of Hesse, who was subordinate to Prince Charles of Bavaria.

The King of Hanover had concentrated his army, consisting of about 19,000 men, near Göttingen, and awaited the advance of the Prussians. The Hanoverian army was commanded by General von Arentschild. It was in admirable order, highly disciplined, well armed, and animated with the most loyal spirit towards its Sovereign and country. It fought with heroic bravery, and gained the day against the Prussians, who were numerically inferior, in the battle which was fought at Langensalza; but it was quite unequal to cope with the overpowering Prussian forces which were advancing, and King George was finally obliged to accept the terms offered by Prussia for a capitulation. These were

“free retreat for the King, Crown Prince, and all officers, with their arms and horses, but the men were to be dismissed and sent to their homes.”

King George had demanded a free passage for himself and his whole army to South Germany, his intention being to support the Austrian arms against Italy. This was refused by Prussia. King George then appealed to Prince Alexander of Hesse, commanding the South German army, with his headquarters at Bamberg, for assistance, to which Prince Alexander replied “that with a force of 19,000 men he could cut his way through.”

All negotiations being broken off, the order was given to General von Flies, commanding the Prussian advanced guard of 9,000 men, to attack vigorously and at once the Hanoverians at Langensalza. He was to be supported by Generals Goeben and Manteuffel; but the former had to remain at Eisenach, in order to guard against a threatened advance of the Bavarians, and the latter was then at too great a distance from the scene of action to give support. The action lasted from ten till five. The Prussian forces were unable to force the Hanoverian position, and General von Flies suspended the combat. The Prussians retired to their former position, and the Hanoverians remained on the battlefield. The loss on both sides was great. The Hanoverians lost 150 officers and 1,300 men; the Prussians thirty-eight officers and 700 men.

A fresh attack on the part of the reinforced Prussian army was to take place on the 29th of June, the

Hanoverians being surrounded on all sides. There was no escape. On the evening of the 28th King William, who had been greatly moved by these events, and desirous of staying further useless loss of life, and, as a soldier, being filled with admiration of the heroic bravery of the Hanoverian army, again offered, through General von Manteuffel, an honourable capitulation. The following were the conditions :—

1. The King and the Crown Prince to reside beyond the limits of Hanover, with freedom of choice of residence.

2. Officers and officials of the Hanoverian army to promise on their honour not to serve against Prussia—to retain their arms, baggage, and horses, and to enjoy the same rights and privileges towards the Prussian Administration as they did under the Hanoverian Government.

3. Non-commissioned officers and privates to surrender arms, horses, and ammunition, and to return to their homes, giving a promise not to serve against Prussia.

These terms were accepted by King George, and he left by way of Altenburg for Vienna. The devotion and self-sacrifice of the Hanoverian army, the fidelity to their oath of allegiance, were beyond all praise, and secured to them the admiration and respect of the Prussian army.

Hesse-Cassel was also occupied by the Prussians without resistance. The Elector was taken prisoner, and sent to Stettin.*

I had warned King George—with whom I had been personally acquainted since our boyhood—of the danger

* Hahn's "*Geschichte Preussisches Vaterlandes*," p. 541.

of his position, and submitted to him, through his Minister at Berlin, Baron Reitzenstein, that his only safe policy was to subscribe to the Prussian conditions. He had hitherto pursued a wavering policy, but up to the last moment Count Bismarck had counted on his joining Prussia. The sudden arrival from Vienna of his half-brother, Prince Charles of Solms, however, changed his resolution, apparently inducing him at the last moment to throw in his lot with Austria. Had he taken a different course he would have saved his throne, and would have become a member of a great and powerful Empire; but he exemplified the classical saying—"Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat."

North Germany was now in the complete possession of Prussia. The South German States sided with Austria, and numerically formed a much larger contingent than that afforded to Prussia in Northern Germany.

Although I do not feel myself competent to describe the military operations of the war, and am unwilling to weary my readers with a diffuse account of them, the incidents, however, attending this war, and the momentous results arising from it, are of such deep interest that I cannot abstain from giving a cursory sketch, without entering into a detailed explanation of the campaign.

The Austrians, who had been so denounced for their armaments when, according to Count Bismarck, Prussia had not moved a man or made any military preparation, ought to have forestalled Prussia in occupying Saxony

and Dresden. If repulsed, they had their retreat through the narrow defiles leading into Bohemia, which, if properly defended, should have rendered the advance of an attacking army very difficult, if not dangerous. But on this occasion the Austrians were, as usual, too late; and Benedek was hampered by the conditions of the plan of campaign prepared in the Vienna War Department.

General von Moltke, on the other hand, had previously worked out and decided on his plan of campaign, providing also for contingences, such, for instance, as the possible invasion of Silesia.

He was determined that the Prussian armies should operate with rapidity and vigour. Within three days after the commencement of hostilities Prussia was in possession of Hanover, Saxony, and Hesse-Cassel, thus securing full possession of the whole of Northern Germany.

I am not aware that there was any formal declaration of war. This ancient form appears in modern times to have been superseded by an appeal of the Sovereign to his people. On the 18th of June King William addressed an appeal to his people, of which I give the following translation:—

TO MY PEOPLE.

At the moment when the Prussian army is leaving for a decisive combat, I am impelled to speak to my people, to the sons and grandsons of the brave fathers to whom my father, resting in God, spoke half a century ago words that can never be forgotten.

The country is in danger! Austria and a large portion of Germany is in arms against it. It is only a few years since, with free-will and without thinking of any injury, I offered the hand of alliance to the Emperor of Austria, for the purpose of liberating a German land from foreign rule. From the blood shed in common, I hoped that a brotherhood in arms would lead to a firm alliance resting on mutual regard and recognition, and on that mutual co-operation from which would result the internal welfare and the external importance of Germany.

But my hope has been deceived. The old, unhappy jealousy has again burst forth in glaring flames. Prussia must be weakened, destroyed, degraded; wherever we look in Germany, we are surrounded by enemies, whose battle-cry is "Down with Prussia!"

But the spirit of 1813 lives in my people! Who could despoil us of one foot of Prussian soil if we are earnestly determined to protect the inheritance of our fathers? if the King and his people, united firmer than ever by the dangers of the Fatherland, hold it to be their highest and holiest duty to give their blood and treasure to safeguard its honour? I have done everything to spare Prussia from the burthens and sacrifices of war. My people know this. God knows, who searches the hearts. The blame is not mine if my people should have to endure a severe struggle, and perhaps grievous suffering; but no other choice remains for us.

We must engage in a contest for life and death against those who wish to drag down the Prussia of the great Elector—of the great Frederick; Prussia as it issued forth from the Wars of Liberation—from the summit to which the spirit and vigour of its Princes, the bravery, the devotion and civilisation of its people, had raised it.

Let us implore the Almighty—the disposer of the destinies of nations, the disposer of the fate of battles—to bless our arms.

Should God give us the victory, then shall we be strong enough to renew the loose bond, which more in name than

in reality held together the German States, in another firmer and sounder form.

GOD WITH US!

Thus opened this sanguinary duel between the two great German Powers, destined to produce the most momentous results for the future of Europe.

During late times it has been the wise policy of the neutral European Powers to localise wars, and shorten, as far as possible, the duration of the struggle, and thus, by maintaining their own neutrality, to prevent a general conflagration. The campaign on which the German Powers now entered is the shortest on record. It lasted seven weeks. One great battle decided the object of the war.

At the opening of the war England at once declared her neutrality. We are, I think, too apt to declare hastily our neutrality, without conditions for future contingencies. We should always bear in mind that either during the course of a war, or at the conclusion of peace, eventualities may occur which may change the balance of power in Europe, and thus gravely affect British interests. Territorial changes as regards Belgium or Switzerland, for instance, would be very prejudicial to British interests. The Eastern Question again, or that of the possession of Constantinople, could not be solved by belligerent Powers without the interposition and assent of Great Britain; and in any future war (and I fear that we are not far distant from one) we should make our reserves before declaring an unconditional neutrality. I have been led to make the

foregoing observation in consequence of the experience I gained previous to the Franco-German War.

On June 20th, in consequence of an adverse vote to the Government on the Reform Bill, the Premier, Earl Russell, and his colleagues in the Ministry resigned. Some delay in forming a new Ministry was occasioned by the absence of the Queen in Scotland, and Her Majesty thought it necessary to return to Windsor for the Ministerial crisis. The vote had taken place not on the Bill itself, but on a question of detail, and it was hoped that a compromise might have been effected; but after due consideration of the question, the resignation of the Ministry was accepted by Her Majesty, and the Earl of Derby was entrusted with the formation of a new Ministry. It was an unfortunate moment for a change of Ministry. Europe was in commotion; Spain threatened with revolution; war raging in Germany and Italy; and great commercial and financial depression existing at home. But the chief loss to the country was that of Lord Clarendon as Minister for Foreign Affairs, whose great ability and experience in foreign policy had gained the confidence and respect of all foreign Governments.

Lord Derby was charged by the Queen to form a new Ministry, in which Lord Stanley was appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs.

On the 12th of June Count Karolyi, the Austrian Ambassador to Prussia, had demanded his passports, and in his official note the violent measures of the Prussian Government in Holstein were stated to be the cause of

the rupture of diplomatic relations. He left Berlin on the following day with the whole of the Austrian Embassy. The archives of the Austrian Legation and the charge of Austrian subjects in Prussia were confided to Count Bylandt, the Netherlands Minister at Berlin. In memory of the many kindnesses and attentions I had received during my three years' residence at the Imperial Court, I was happy on this occasion to offer hospitality to the Austrian Embassy, and Count Karolyi and all the members of his Embassy dined with me in their travelling dress before leaving by the railway. It was merely a friendly act of hospitality, without any political meaning, and I did not accompany them to the railway.

The King, with Count Bismarck and General von Moltke, left Berlin on the 30th of June for Gitschin, his headquarters in the field. In accordance with orders given by the King (after the occupation of Saxony) the three Prussian armies had already advanced into Bohemia—the First and Third on June 23rd, the Second on June 26th.

The entire force comprised nine Corps d'Armée (including the Guards), or about 250,000 men. The exact force of the Austrians was not known, but it was estimated at about 200,000 men, not including the Saxon army, which was computed at 30,000 men. The neutrality of France and Russia being assured to Count Bismarck, Prussia was enabled to withdraw the greater part of her troops from her eastern and western frontiers, and to concentrate her forces against Austria,

while the latter sent the flower of her army to defend Venetia, which was subjected to an attack by an Italian army of 120,000 men, under General La Marmora.

I was told by a Prussian officer after the war that on several occasions, on the fire of the Prussian infantry, they were surprised to see the whole front line fall. They could not believe that they were all killed, and on going up to them they discovered that they were Italians, who had no heartiness in the cause for which they were fighting, and only wished to be made prisoners. Austria had sent her best troops to Italy, as she could not depend on her Italian troops to fight against their countrymen. She intermixed her Italian soldiers with those of other regiments—a wrong method of instilling loyalty and steadiness into the ranks of her army.

By the admirable strategy of General von Moltke the three Prussian armies were to converge towards one point in Bohemia, so as to be in “touch” with each other.

General Benedek had concentrated his army in a strong defensive position on the right bank of the Elbe, near Königgrätz.* In this position he accepted battle. On the evening of July 2nd Prince Frederick Charles learnt, by reconnaissances made by Major von Ungar and other officers, that the enemy was massing great forces in front of his army.† The intelligence was brought to

* The Austrians term it the Battle of Sadowa—the Prussians “Königgrätz.”

† Hahn’s “Geschichte,” page 555.

the King at midnight by General von Voigts-Retz, Prince Frederick Charles' Chief-of-Staff. Moltke was aroused from sleep, and immediate orders were sent by the King to the commanders of the three armies to advance on the following morning. The army of the Crown Prince was five miles (German), that of General Herwarth von Bittenfeld three miles distant from Gitschin, the headquarters of the King. Both received their orders at four o'clock a.m., and within an hour each army was in movement. The Austrians had concentrated from 170,000 to 180,000 men, and had made every preparation for a decisive battle. Their position was well chosen. Prince Frederick Charles attacked the centre, whilst the two armies of the Crown Prince and General Herwarth would on arrival fall on the right and left flanks of the enemy. The army of Prince Frederick Charles, supported by that of General Herwarth, was sorely pressed, but held its ground in hourly expectation of the arrival of the Crown Prince, which would decide the day. The position was that of the Duke of Wellington awaiting the arrival of Blücher at Waterloo. On his arrival on the field at eight o'clock a.m. of the 3rd of July, the King had taken the command in chief, and at about one o'clock Prince Frederick Charles brought up his last available infantry reserve, a part of the Third Army Corps, which, on going into action, marched past before the King, playing the national air, "*Heil Dir im Sieger-Kranz.*"

In the meantime the Crown Prince was arriving

behind the heights of Chlum. This succour came just at the right moment to reinforce General Franseky, who addressed to his soldiers the heroic words—"Retire no further. Here let us die." At this moment the Crown Prince's army was advancing over the heights of Chlum on the Austrian right flank.

After severe fighting the position of Chlum was taken, and the armies of Prince Frederick Charles and General Herwarth having carried the Austrian front and left flank, General Benedek saw that the battle was lost, and the retreat of the Austrian army commenced. The two Princes met on the heights of Chlum, and embraced each other in the presence of their armies. The Crown Prince then sought his father, and only met him late in the afternoon, when the aged monarch embraced, with tears in his eyes, his victorious son—the Crown Prince bending from his saddle to kiss the King's hand, which had delivered to him the highest Prussian military order of merit. The troops bivouacked on the battlefield. The victory was dearly purchased. The Prussians lost nearly 10,000 killed and wounded, amongst the former the young Prince Antony of Hohenzollern.

The loss of the Austrians was computed at 40,000 men, inclusive of over 18,000 prisoners; 174 Austrian cannon and eleven flags were taken by the Prussians.

At eleven o'clock at night the King sent a telegram to the Queen of Prussia in the following words:—"We have gained to-day a complete victory over the Austrian army near Königgrätz, between the Elbe and Bistritz.

The battle lasted eight hours. Loss of the enemy, with trophies, not yet known, but considerable. All eight* corps were engaged, but great painful losses. I thank God for His mercy. We are all well. The Governor [of Berlin] to fire salute of victory."

The King also ordered the victory to be solemnised throughout the country by a religious service of thanksgiving.

This astounding victory flashed through and electrified Europe, but nowhere did it produce greater amazement than in France, destructive as it was of all the calculations and hopes of the Imperial policy.

General von Moltke, in congratulating the King, said, "Your Majesty has not only gained a battle, but the campaign."

During the battle the King was several times under fire. Count Bismarck told me that he remonstrated with His Majesty against the danger he was incurring when the balls were hissing around him, and on the King expressing his doubts as to their being bullets, Count Bismarck replied, "*Glauben Ihre Majestät dass sie schwalben sind?*"† and urged the King more speedily beyond the range of fire, using his own spurs on the King's horse.

It is impossible to know exactly what passed between the Emperor Napoleon and Count Bismarck in their several confidential meetings previous to the war with Austria in 1866. I believe their

* The Mulbe Landwehr Corps was in the rear.

† "Does Your Majesty think they are swallows?"

exchange of ideas was more of an imaginary and speculative character than of any formed and decided plan of future action, nor do I believe that Count Bismarck could have held out any hopes to the Emperor of obtaining extension of territory at the cost of Germany, for he well knew that King William would never assent to it. But it is not improbable that, with a view to assuring the neutrality of France in his ambitious designs against Austria, he may have flattered the Emperor with hopes of compensation at the cost of other States. The Emperor Napoleon was a mystic dreamer, and, being a fatalist, believed that his dreams were destined to be fulfilled; and the secret means he employed for carrying out his ambitious and tortuous policy ended disastrously to himself and to France. It is difficult to conceive how a ruler so astute, so sagacious and far-seeing, who had so marvellously obtained such an exalted position after a life of untoward experiences, could have been thus blinded to the consequences of a policy so fatal to the interests of his country and to his dynasty. But the classical poet says—

“*Facilis descensus Averni.*”

Whatever may have been the object and result of Count Bismarck's confidential communications with the Emperor Napoleon previous to the rupture of relations between Austria and Prussia, there remains the incontestable fact that all the available Prussian troops on the western frontier were withdrawn to form

a portion of the army directed against Austria. The Rhenish provinces were entirely denuded of any force capable of defending the frontier if menaced by France, and this certainly would not have been the case had not Prussia been confident of French neutrality in the war with Austria.

The same was the case in regard to Russia, but the intimate relations between Russia and Prussia in those days, and the grateful recollections by the Emperor Alexander II. of Prussian sympathy towards Russia during the Crimean War, rendered the neutrality of Russia more certain and reliable.

Thus the Emperor Napoleon, having aided in establishing an "United Italy" on his southern frontier—having raised her to the rank of a Great Power, which at no distant future might become a formidable rival in regard to European policy—His Imperial Majesty was acting a similar part by aiding Prussia, if successful in the war against Austria, in forming a strong united Germany on his eastern frontier, destined to be a formidable rival with France on the political arena of Europe.

I am not aware that any proclamation of French neutrality was officially published on the breaking-out of the war with Austria. The only mention or notification of it appears to have been in a letter from M. Drouyn de Lhuys to M. Benedetti, dated March 31st, 1866, in which he says:—" *Nous sommes toujours dans les mêmes dispositions. Tout en reconnaissant la gravité de la crise à la quelle nous assistons, nous ne voyons rien dans le différend, tel qu'il se presente*

aujourd'hui de motif suffisant pour nous départir de notre attitude de neutralité." *

From this it is evident that the neutrality of France in the expected war, if not actually notified, must have been known to Count Bismarck at the end of March ; and it would further appear from this letter that it was not of a binding character.

It is probable, therefore, that it rested on some basis, the secret of which has never been disclosed.

I may here incidentally mention, without guaranteeing the authenticity, that I was informed that just before Count Bismarck's departure (on June 30th) for the seat of war he was visited by a secret French agent, whose name commenced with H, said to be a Dane. He is reported to have informed Count Bismarck that he had been with M. Drouyn de Lhuys on the previous Thursday, and that he was charged by him to state to Count Bismarck "that the time had come for Prussia to make offers to France." The agent gave Count Bismarck to understand that France expected the triangle formed by the Moselle and Rhine, including the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. Count Bismarck is said to have replied, "It was not the moment to enter on this subject. Prussia was now engaged in military action, and that action must be decided before the future could be discussed," with other phrases in a similar and evasive sense.

In connection with the above I may mention, as a singular fact, that before the expiration of the year the

* Benedetti, "Ma Mission en Prusse," page 77.

Emperor Napoleon was in negotiation with the King of the Netherlands for the acquisition by purchase of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, and that an arrangement was duly concluded. I shall have to refer more in detail to the Luxembourg question in another chapter. It was a question of considerable importance, which brought Europe to the verge of war; but it was happily arranged by an European Conference held in London in 1867, chiefly owing to the moderation and conciliatory spirit evinced by Prussia and France.

On the 4th of July Lord Clarendon announced to me his resignation of the Foreign Office. I give the following extract from his letter:—

“This is my last letter, as I give up the seals on Friday, and I greatly regret not being able to accompany my ‘*adieu*’ to you with the announcement that you were a G.C.B.; but unfortunately there was no vacancy. I did not know, until it was given to Magenis, that the number was limited, but there was no vacancy for him. However, ‘*ce qui est différé ne sera pas perdu*,’ and I shall take care that Stanley is made aware of my intention (Lord Russell’s also) and disappointment.”

I answered Lord Clarendon as follows:—

“Pray accept my best thanks for your kind thought of me. The honour, if it had fallen to me, would have been doubly valuable through you; but I can wait. What has pleased me most is that both you and Lord Russell should have thus proved to me your satisfaction with my services.”

Two days later I received the following letter from Lord Clarendon, dated the 6th of July:—

“ I am happy to inform you that the Queen signed a special Statute to-day, by which you will be made a G.C.B.* Yesterday, when I wrote to you, there were doubts upon the possibility of this being done, and it now gives me great pleasure to announce that the difficulty was overcome by the kindness of the Queen.”

In reply to Lord Clarendon I wrote as follows :—

“ Pray accept my most sincere thanks for your kind consideration in recommending me to the Queen for the G.C.B. This unexpected honour and mark of approval has given me the greatest satisfaction, and I am extremely gratified to have received it through your hands. I do not know what is the proper course on these occasions, but I should be very much obliged if you could convey to the Queen, with the expression of my loyalty and respectful duty, my deep gratitude for this distinguished mark of Her Majesty’s favour.”

Before closing this chapter I must again express the great loss to the country of the services of Lord Clarendon. There never was a Minister more ably qualified for the important post of Foreign Affairs, one more generally respected and esteemed at home and abroad, or who discharged the duties of this important office with greater distinction. He inspired everyone with zeal and activity in the performance of their duties, and was always ready to recognise their services.

* The Statute likewise includes Buchanan and Magenis.

CHAPTER IV.

Departure of French Ambassador for Headquarters—Mediation of Emperor Napoleon—Cession of Venetia to His Majesty—Victories of Austria in Italy—Count Bismarck in favour of Peace—His Motives—Occupation of Prague—Prussian Armies advanced to Pressburg and Vienna—Preliminaries of Peace signed at Nikolsburg on July 26th—Successes of Prussians in Southern Germany—Secret Offensive and Defensive Treaties with South German States—Question of Compensation to France—Count Bismarck's Views of It—Aggrandisement of Prussia no Danger to England—Reply of Count Bismarck to Claim of France for the Palatinate and Luxembourg—Conciliatory Assurances of Emperor Napoleon—Russian Proposal for European Congress—Reply thereto of Count Bismarck—My Report to Lord Stanley on Press and Public Opinion in regard to Preliminaries—Observations on Position of Prussia and Policy of Count Bismarck—Review by the King of Army before Leaving Nikolsburg—His Address—His Return to Berlin—Solemn Entry of Prussian Army into Berlin—Military Dinner given by the King—His Toast.

IMMEDIATELY after the Austrian defeat at Königgrätz, Count Benedetti, French Ambassador at Berlin, received instructions by telegraph from M. Drouyn de Lhuys to repair without delay to the headquarters of the Prussian army. He started the same night, and after a journey of some difficulty and delay (there being no practicable railways) he arrived at Czernohora, in Moravia, a few miles from Brunn, the headquarters of the King.

Count Benedetti, in his book "*Ma Mission en Prusse*," states that "when I was sent to the headquarters of the Prussian army, I had no other

mission than to obtain the King's assent to an armistice." *

It appears that the Emperor of Austria, after having signally defeated the Italian army under General La Marmora, at Custozza, and having gained a naval victory over the Italian Fleet at Lissa, ceded Venetia to the Emperor Napoleon, and at the same 'time requested him to mediate with Prussia. It was in consequence of this request that Count Benedetti was instructed to repair to the headquarters of the Prussian army. He reached Czernohora late at night, and repaired at once to the quarters of Count Bismarck, with whom he remained a considerable time in conference. It is impossible to know what took place at that interview—what was the nature of the proposals made, or in what manner they were received by Count Bismarck—but there was an evident wish on the part of Count Bismarck, at so critical a moment, to adopt a conciliatory course, and not to decline the friendly mediation of France. After the brilliant successes of the Prussian army, Count Bismarck must have felt that he was not only enabled, but that it was politic on his side, to meet the offer of mediation on the part of the Emperor Napoleon in a spirit of conciliation, and as the act of a friend and not of an enemy. He must have felt that the real object of the war had been attained—that Prussia was assured of her supremacy in Northern Germany, and of the exclusion of Austria, and that the first step to the unity of Germany had been thus acquired.

* Benedetti, "*Ma Mission en Prusse*," page 148.

Count Bismarck often observed to me that Austria was an Eastern, and not a German, Power, as her name implied—*Öst-Reich* (Eastern Empire). He must also have felt that the acquisition of the Elbe Duchies gave to Prussia the means of becoming a naval Power of some consideration, whilst the annexation of Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, Nassau, and Frankfort, gave her that compactness which she required, and that uniformity which added strength to her vital forces.

These great objects being now assured, the further continuance of the war had no object. On the other hand, it had its risks. It might have brought France into the field, and thus have produced a general conflagration in Europe, the duration and results of which could not be foreseen.

The object of Count Benedetti's mission was to obtain an armistice. To this the King was ready to assent as soon as the preliminaries of peace were agreed to by Austria, but without arresting in the meantime the advance of the Prussian army.

The two armies consequently continued their military operations—the army of the Crown Prince advancing in direct line on Vienna, that of Prince Frederick Charles diverging more to the south-east towards Pressburg. Prague was occupied by the Prussians without resistance, and after the occurrence of sharp fighting at Tobitschau, the headquarters of the King, arrived at the castle of Nikolsburg on the 17th of July, only fourteen days after the battle of Königgrätz.

The command of the railway to Vienna had fallen

into the hands of the Prussian commanders. The retreat, therefore, of a portion of the Austrian army, amounting to 75,000 men, which had retired on Olmütz, could no longer be continued to Vienna by rail; and fearing that this division of the Austrians would be completely encircled by the Prussian forces, the Archduke Albert, who had relieved General von Benedek in the command of the Northern Army, ordered it to retire by a circuitous route through Hungary. An armistice for five days came into effect on the 22nd, and meanwhile the negotiations for peace were being actively carried on between Count Bismarck and the French, Austrian, and Italian Ambassadors.

On the 26th of July the preliminaries, under the mediation of France, were signed at Nikolsburg, and these were afterwards amplified into the treaty of peace concluded at Prague on August 23rd. They were as follow:—

The Emperor of Austria recognised the dissolution of the Germanic Confederation, and assented to a new organisation of Germany without the participation of Austria. He further engaged to recognise the Confederation to be formed by Prussia north of the Main, and declared his concurrence in the formation of an union of the Southern States, whose connection with the North German Confederation was reserved for further mutual agreement.

The Emperor of Austria resigned all his acquired rights in regard to the Duchies of Sleswig and Holstein to the King of Prussia.

The Emperor of Austria agreed to recognise the new arrangements and territorial changes to be carried out by the

King of Prussia in North Germany. These were the incorporation of Hanover, Electoral Hesse, Nassau, and Frankfort.

Prussia agreed to the maintenance intact of the Kingdom of Saxony.

Austria agreed to pay to Prussia for the costs of the war twenty millions of thalers (or about three millions sterling).*

The South German States were not included in the preliminaries, nor in the peace with Austria which was provisionally concluded on the 26th. The negotiations for peace with the former were to be carried on at Berlin.

At headquarters the preliminaries of peace were not wholly agreeable either to the King or to his Generals; and the non-acquisition of Saxony was the cause of much disappointment. Count Bismarck stood almost alone in favour of peace. He argued, as I learnt from his own lips, that the object of the war had been fully gained. The Elbe Duchies were obtained for Prussia; Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, Nassau, and Frankfort incorporated with Prussia; Austria was excluded from Germany; Prussia placed at the headship of Northern Germany. An increase of territory of 1,308 German square miles and of 4,285,700 population, with a large war indemnity, was a fair remuneration for a war which had lasted barely seven weeks!

In his discussion with the military party Count Bismarck inquired of them—"Where do you intend to march to? and for what object would be the renewal of hostilities?"

He decided most prudently for peace, on the

* Hahn.

principle that by acting leniently towards your enemy of to-day he may become your friend of to-morrow. He followed the maxim of the German proverb—“*Ein Vogel in der Hand ist besser als ein Vogel auf dem Dach.*” *

I have not referred to the campaign in Southern Germany, conducted by Generals von Falkenstein and von Manteuffel, against the armies of the South German States under the command of Prince Charles of Bavaria and Prince Alexander of Hesse. During a series of engagements the Prussians were continuously victorious. They occupied Frankfort, Heidelberg, Mannheim, the Baravian territory to Nuremberg and to Wurzburg, Nassau, and Hesse-Darmstadt.

After the preliminaries were signed at Nikolsburg the military operations in Southern Germany continued, and on each of the Southern States being obliged separately to ask for peace, an armistice was granted by the King of Prussia, and the war was at an end.

The final treaties with the Southern States were later negotiated and signed at Berlin. In negotiating these treaties, the object of Count Bismarck was rather to promote the future than to take account of the past, and he profited wisely of the opportunity to show extreme leniency rather than to impose any sacrifice of a loss of territory.

Through the mediation of France, Saxony was saved from dismemberment. Bavaria had to cede only a small strip of land to round off the southern territory of

* “A bird in the hand is better than one on the roof.”

Electoral Hesse incorporated with Prussia. Hesse-Darmstadt ceded to Prussia the district of Hesse-Homburg and the exclusive right of occupying the fortress of Mayence, and the Hessian Province north of the Main was to be included in the North German Confederation. No territorial cession was demanded of Würtemberg and Baden, but all the Southern States had to pay war indemnities.

I cannot omit to observe here that all the Southern States, excepting Baden, had applied to the Emperor Napoleon for his mediation.

On learning at Berlin during the negotiations that the Emperor Napoleon had demanded the cession of the Palatinate and the fortress of Mayence, with other territory of Hesse, the eyes of the Bavarian and Hessian envoys were opened, and they readily assented to the secret treaties, offensive and defensive, proposed to them by Count Bismarck, which utterly frustrated any future attempts to place them under the protectorate of France.

These secret treaties guaranteed to the various South German States the inviolability of their territories, and bound them in case of war to place their whole contingents under the command of the King of Prussia.

Thus, even before the North German Confederation had been organised, the intimate bonds with South Germany were assured.

Saxony, which had thrown in her lot with Austria, more than any of the German States, maintained her

former territorial status. She had to enter the North German Confederation, and to place her reconstructed army under the command of the King of Prussia. She had also to give up the fortress of Königstein to Prussia, and to pay ten millions of thalers as war indemnity.

From what subsequently came to light, and from private information I received, it appears that Count Benedetti enlarged on the instructions he stated that he had received, and broached with Count Bismarck the question of compensation to France, possibly at his own initiative, or probably by secret instructions from his Imperial employer.

It is certain that at his first interview with Count Bismarck—of long duration—the question of compensation for France was broached; and on this subject, although the sacrifice of any portion of German soil was categorically rejected, vague hints were thrown out that compensation might be found elsewhere in adjacent French-speaking States.

It is impossible to know what really took place at that interview; it has been ever since a profound secret—I might even add, a complete mystery—the veil of which has never been raised either by Count Bismarck or M. Benedetti, and it must consequently remain a dark page of history.*

It appears, however, from a despatch addressed by M. Benedetti to M. Drouyn de Lhuys on the 4th of June, before the outbreak of the war, that

* Benedetti, "*Ma Mission en Prusse*," page 165.

the question of compensation to France, in the event of Prussian success, had been already discussed with Count Bismarck.

The King (as stated by Count Bismarck to Count Benedetti) refused to admit that he could cede any portion of Prussian territory, and that the only compensation which could be found might be taken on whatever frontier of France the French language was spoken. Count Bismarck observed to the King that, in order to dispose of such contiguous territories, it was necessary first to make a conquest of them.

When reference was made to Luxembourg, M. Benedetti states, in a despatch to M. Drouyn de Lhuys, that "he reminded Count Bismarck that Luxembourg, as well as Belgium and certain Swiss cantons, were not without 'owners,' adding that, not wishing to accept a discussion on these eventualities, nor to allow Count Bismarck to suppose that these combinations would have any chance of being considered at Paris, he broke off the conversation in a manner so as to prove that he did not wish to continue it."

I am inclined to believe that on the "compensation" question M. Drouyn de Lhuys had taken much on himself, and that he had, at moments when the Emperor Napoleon was ill, taken advantage to advance claims which had not fully received the Emperor's sanction.

In conversation with Count Bismarck towards the end of August, 1866, after his return from the war, I referred to the current reports of France having

demanded compensation from Prussia in consequence of the great extension of territory she had gained by the war. In reply, Count Bismarck said "that negotiations before the war had taken place, when there had been an idea of France assisting Prussia with an army of 300,000 men. Undoubtedly, in that case, France would have had a right to compensation. But she had remained neutral, and had acted as much in favour of the enemy as in that of Prussia. She had raised her voice to arrest the advance of the Prussian army. She had put in her word for Austria, for Saxony, for Bavaria. We might as well have claimed compensation from France after Solferino, for it was then notorious that fears of Prussian intervention had led to peace."

At this time I wrote to Lord Stanley that I could not view with any dissatisfaction or fear of danger to England an increase of power to Prussia. She was the great Protestant State of Continental Europe. She represented the intelligence, the progress, and the wealth of Germany. We have, I said, nothing to fear from her. She will become a Power of great importance in maintaining the peace of Central Europe. She will gradually advance in a constitutional system of government, and she will play the part of a moderator in Europe. We have much in common with her—our race, our religion, our mutual interests are all interwoven with Prussia, and our political interests should be identical. Why, I continued, should not Germany be allowed to constitute herself as she likes, and as Italy has done?

The national feeling is against foreign intervention, and this spirit has been strongly manifested against France on the present occasion, whereas the principle of non-intervention expressed and observed by England, the impartial tone of her Press, and the general sympathy shown in favour of German independence, have produced a good effect both in Prussia and elsewhere. This will give us greater weight and influence in Germany than if we had rushed in with advice or with menace when the war commenced. A strong Germany will always look to England for moral support, and will naturally seek the alliance of a great maritime Power. These were my arguments, based on convictions which I regarded as sound.

The territorial changes in Europe effected by the preliminaries of Nikolsburg suggested to Prince Gortschakoff the desirableness of an European Congress to confirm the arrangements of the intended treaty. Although his arguments in support of his suggestion were logical, I represented to Lord Stanley that it was a question how far it would be desirable for the neutral Powers to be responsible hereafter for a state of things in the creation of which they had not had any voice. It might, I urged, compromise our position, and involve us in questions in which it would be for our interest to keep aloof.

Russia, I observed, had some *arrière pensée* in her wish for an European Congress; England could have none. All that we could wish for was to keep free from all engagements.

In regard to the preliminaries of Nikolsburg, I observed that the division of Germany into two groups contained the elements of future danger. The Southern States would form an independent group—very much resembling the Confederation of the Rhine in 1803—and must necessarily for protection lean on a Great Power—either on Austria or France. Neither would the preliminaries be wholly satisfactory to the German nation, whose aspirations were for the “unity,” and not for the “division,” of Germany.

But Count Bismarck was not anxious to irritate France, and thus bring about the renewal of the war under disadvantageous circumstances; and I have no doubt that he then anticipated the offensive and defensive treaties with the Southern States, by which their armies, in the event of war, would be placed at the disposal of Prussia.

It had been reported at Berlin that a formal demand had been addressed to the Prussian Government by M. Benedetti asking for compensation, and claiming the Palatinate, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, and (I believe) Mayence. Count Bismarck, it was said, had replied, through Count Goltz at Paris, “that he could not recognise any necessity to give compensation to France, as the proposed territorial changes would not alter the effective military power of Germany, but merely change its federal character.”

I had subsequently a conversation with Count Benedetti. He admitted that he had touched on the subject of compensation with Count Bismarck, but

in the form of a *causerie sérieuse*, and not as having made a formal demand. He observed, with some animation, that the union of the States of Northern Germany under Prussia “was a totally different thing to their entire absorption by Prussia. That France could not complacently view the formation of a great military Power like Prussia on her frontier—in short, that she had gone beyond the limits of the ideas at first entertained, and that France must claim a compensation for her own security and the satisfaction of the nation.”

He did not mention the compensation to which France laid claim ; but he assured me that no reference whatever had been made to Belgium, or any mention made of an alteration of the Belgian frontier.

M. Benedetti left for Paris to confer with the Emperor and his Government on this question. Shortly after his arrival, the Emperor sent for Count Goltz, the Prussian Ambassador, and informed him that the question of compensation to France was one which required grave consideration ; that it should not trouble the good relations between the two States ; and that it admitted of amicable discussion and arrangement.

This completely allayed (at least, for the moment) the apprehensions which this question had caused at Berlin. Nothing could be more moderate than the tone of the Prussian Press towards France. It was calm and dignified, but firm and decided, in refusing to cede any portion of German territory to France.

I was informed on the 28th of July, 1866, that M. d'Oubril, the Russian Minister at Berlin, communicated

on that day to Baron Werther, the acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, a Despatch from his Government, in which the assembling of an European Congress was urgently proposed.

In this Despatch I was told Prince Gortschakoff stated that the events of the war had produced changes which bore on the general policy of Europe, and that he could not admit that these changes could be carried out without the co-operation and concurrence of the European Powers.

M. d'Oubril, in the course of his conversation with Baron Werther, argued that if the result of the war had been merely some small acquisition of territory by the one belligerent at the expense of the other, it might have been effected without reference to Europe. But the changes set forth in the reported preliminaries of peace were of a most important character.

The Germanic Confederation—a creation of the European Powers, resting on European treaties—was to be swept away. A great European Power, hitherto invested with the first rank in that Confederation, was to be excluded from all future participation in German affairs. A new Confederation was to be formed under the direction of another head. Prussia was to be aggrandised. The fate of some of the German Sovereigns was hanging in the balance, while the sovereignty of all was gravely menaced.

“These momentous changes,” argued M. d'Oubril, “changes which seriously affected the balance of power

in Europe, and which would materially transform the map of Germany, if not, perhaps, the map of Europe, could not, in the opinion of his Government, be undertaken by the belligerent Powers alone, under the mediation of one neutral Power, without the co-operation of the other members of the great European family.

“He was, therefore, instructed by his Government to represent to the Prussian Government that, in their opinion, the moment had come when it would be desirable that an European Congress should be convoked for the settlement of the questions now pending, and for the re-establishment of order and security in Germany.”

The foregoing is a correct analysis, as reported to me, of the communication made to the Prussian Minister by M. d'Oubril; but I am not able to state whether all that I have related was contained in the official Despatch from Prince Gortschakoff, or whether the arguments used by M. d'Oubril were gathered from his private instructions.

I was informed that a reply to the above communication was received by M. d'Oubril on the 31st of July, in which Count Bismarck stated “That Prussia had unreservedly accepted the proposal of an European Congress before the war, in the hopes that it might be averted, but that she had been since forced to defend her existence, and to incur at her own risk and peril the dangers of war. She could not, therefore, now risk to compromise the advantages

acquired by her arms by submitting them to the decision of an European Congress."

In communicating this reply to Baron Werther, Count Bismarck, by order of the King, expressed a hope that, in view of the intimate and sincere friendship existing between the two Sovereigns, His Imperial Majesty would not press his proposal.

In reporting to Lord Stanley on the general public opinion, as expressed by the Press, in regard to the preliminaries of peace, I wrote as follows:—

The public—grateful for the restoration of peace—appears generally to approve the conditions agreed upon, although by some they are considered to be within the limits of what Prussia had a right to demand; whilst by others—more especially by the Liberal party—not only in Prussia, but in Germany, they are viewed with disappointment and disfavour, as creating a "division" and not the "unity" of Germany. There is also much disappointment that Saxony was not annexed to Prussia, that kingdom being regarded as of vital importance to Prussia, in a political, industrial, and strategic point of view. The annexation is even urged in the interest of Saxony herself, for it is asserted that she would have enjoyed far greater advantages by becoming a component part of Prussia than by remaining in a position of *quasi*-vassalage.

The annexation of all the States of Northern Germany to the Main will give to Prussia an increase of about four millions of population. Thus in one month will have been effected, with a rapidity and success unparalleled in history, changes which even Count Bismarck, in his most elated moments, never could have anticipated. Indeed, so great, so unexpected has been the success of the Prussian arms, that it is not unlikely to prove an embarrassment, and even a danger, to the political system which Count Bismarck is aiming to establish. His object, and that of

the military party, is to create a great and powerful Prussia, extending from the Baltic to the Main, having full command of the maritime ports on the northern coasts, and the important and strategic maritime position of the Elbe Duchies. On the other hand, the desire of the Liberal party in Prussia and in Germany is to create an united Germany under a strong Power—that Power being Prussia—represented by a national parliament, to be established on the basis of the constitution framed by the Frankfort Assembly in 1849. They look to the fulfilment of their long-cherished dream of a German Empire—uniting the whole German nation under one command. But to attain this end (and they judge that the propitious moment had arrived) Prussia must be fused into Germany, whereas the object of Count Bismarck was to fuse Germany into Prussia.

It is to this point that public agitation will now direct itself, not only in Prussia, but throughout Germany. The weakness and political disorganisation displayed by the Southern States in the late struggle offer a convincing proof that there can be no material force or energy of action where there is a want of unity; and the sad experience acquired by the Civil War is a warning to the South German population that the recurrence of a similar misfortune can alone be obviated by the establishment of an United Germany under one supreme head, with a national representation forming the link of union between the several States.

In my humble opinion a great stride has been made to the attainment of this aim, and the rapid course of events will force Prussia—if not at present, at no distant date—willingly or unwillingly, to rally the nation round her standard, and to put herself at the head of Germany.

Count Bismarck is wise at this moment to restrict his ambition to the acquirement of Northern Germany. Prussia could not now risk a war with France, and without a collision with her no German unity will be established.

But there is another motive which must weigh powerfully with Count Bismarck—viz., a wish not to endanger the

advantages already acquired. If at this moment the Imperial crown were offered to the King of Prussia, with the Constitution voted by the National Assembly at Frankfort in 1849, and with the Electoral Law passed by that Assembly, the whole internal system of government in Prussia would be submerged. The Feudal party, with its limited notion of constitutional rights, would be swept to the winds, and a moral revolution would take place in Prussia of as great importance as the miraculous successes which have attended her arms.

For these reasons, therefore, Count Bismarck will resist to the utmost any pressure which may seek to drive him beyond the limits of the preliminaries agreed to at Nikolsburg, and he will be contented with the creation of a great and powerful Prussia, without aiming to place the Imperial crown on the head of his Sovereign.

I may observe that Count Bismarck has passed through with wonderful success one phase of his ambitious undertaking—namely, that of “Demolition.” The second phase is about to commence—namely, the work of Reconstruction. In carrying out this latter phase, Count Bismarck will encounter great difficulties—difficulties, however, which his energy and iron will may succeed in overcoming. The exigencies of a theoretically constitutional, but a practically absolute, monarchy—the reactionary tendency of a triumphant military party—the strong “particularist” feelings in the dispossessed States, which are not uprooted in a day—the fanaticism of a feudal class, whose political opinions are associated with a past age—and the active pressure of the Progressist party, undaunted by defeat, will severely test the statesmanship, the skill, and the patience of Count Bismarck.

These are difficulties of no mean order, which he will have to surmount. It is through these shoals that he will have to steer the vessel of State, and he will be fortunate if in avoiding “Scylla” he is not driven on “Charybdis.”

Bold in conception and energetic in action, unrestrained by scruples and unmoved by principles, governing by fear where he

could not win by love, this intrepid, dexterous, and powerful Minister has now in his hands the most important part which, perhaps, has ever fallen to the lot of a statesman to fill. On the success of his policy will not only depend the future greatness and prosperity of his country, but also the maintenance of the security and peace of Europe.*

The King and Crown Prince, accompanied by the other Royal Princes, and attended by Count Bismarck, General von Roon, and General von Moltke, returned to Berlin on the evening of the 5th of August.

Before leaving Nikolsburg the King held a review of his army on the 30th and 31st of July. On its conclusion His Majesty addressed the following words to his assembled generals :—

What we witness to-day is the work of God ! To God alone be the glory ! We have been the instruments of God ! To the incomparable bravery of my glorious army, and to your distinguished leading, I owe—the Fatherland owes—this splendid campaign, so quickly ended, crowned with such glorious results. Once more my fullest gratitude and my thanks.

The whole return journey was one of triumphant jubilation of all classes of the people, and His Majesty was received in his capital with the warmest enthusiasm. The name of “ Bismarck ” was likewise greeted with vociferous applause.

The triumphant entry of the troops into Berlin took place on the 20th and 21st of September, and they were

* This was addressed to Lord Stanley on August 4th, 1866, and represented then the political position of Prussia after the acceptance of the preliminaries of peace signed at Nikolsburg on July 26th.

received and entertained in the most cordial and most hospitable manner.

It was an imposing and interesting sight. The procession, headed by Count Bismarck, General Roon, and General Moltke, who preceded the King and the Royal Princes, was formed of the Guards, with contingents from every regiment of the Prussian army and of the armies of Prussia's allies.* They entered through the Brandenburg gate—on which was the Car of Victory, carried off by the first Napoleon to Paris, and restored in 1815—and marched down the centre alley of the Linden, on each side of which the captured Austrian guns (208 in number) were ranged.

On reaching the square at the end of the Linden, the troops marched past the King in front of Blücher's statue, amid the enthusiastic applause of a dense mass of spectators.

It was a day of rejoicing such as Berlin had never witnessed. Many strangers from all parts came to witness it—among them were the Marquis of Hartington, the late Duke of Manchester, and many English officers. There was not a horse to be hired; and knowing the danger and discomfort on such an occasion of an untried and unsafe horse, I was happily enabled to mount Lord Hartington on my own saddle-horse, which, from experience at the reviews, I knew to be a perfect charger.

Great military dinners were given by the King and the Princes, and the city of Berlin was brilliantly

* Hahn, page 577.

illuminated at night. His Majesty gave the following toast at his banquet:—

My toast is to the Fatherland and to the Army. I spoke that portentous phrase—"The Fatherland is in danger!" It inflamed all Prussian hearts. Self-sacrifice in all classes, in all families, was the magical result. The army, ready for war, awaited with hopeful expectancy the signal "Forward! forward!" It came, and victory on victory ensued with unexpected rapidity. Heroic courage, self-sacrifice, and perseverance obtained unparalleled results. An honourable peace closed the sanguinary but glorious work, which cost heavy sacrifices. Our sorrowing hearts retain the memory of these sacrifices. May the peace be lasting, and equally happy for the future of Prussia and of Germany. I raise my glass to thank my faithful people who gathered round me; to thank my victorious, glorious army, whose heroic deeds will be ever inscribed in the page of history. Long live my army—the people in arms! Long live the Fatherland!

The King instituted, on the day of the entry of the troops, in commemoration of the campaign, a cross of bronze, made from the captured cannon, with a laurel wreath in the centre, the initials of the King, and the words "To Prussia's victorious army," on one side of the cross; on the other side, "God was with us. To Him be the glory."

Provision was made for the families of those who had fallen in the war, and dotations to Count Bismarck, General Roon, and General Moltke, and other general officers, for their services to the country, were allotted to be paid out of the war indemnities.

Thus ended a war the shortest in duration—but

productive of the most important results—recorded in history.

The total loss of the Prussian armies in killed and wounded during the campaign was estimated at 22,000.

The expenses of the war were largely covered by the indemnities paid by the vanquished States. The principle of exacting large indemnities from the losing party in war, although not novel, appears now to be generally accepted as one of the corollaries on *vac victis*; but I do not remember that England has acted on this principle in years past, except in the case of China.

CHAPTER V.

Analysis of the Negotiations between Count Bismarck and M. Benedetti on the Subject of Compensation to France for the Aggrandisement of Prussia—Secret Treaty submitted to Count Bismarck by M. Benedetti—His Statement that the Proposal emanated from Count Bismarck, although acknowledging that the Draft Project was in his Handwriting—Count Bismarck's Refutation—Incident attending Publication of Secret Treaty—Conversation with Count Bismarck—Anecdote.

HAVING referred in the previous chapter to the compensation demanded by France as a counterpoise to the large acquisition of territory to Prussia by the annexation of Hanover, Hesse, Nassau, and Frankfort, in addition to the annexation of the Elbe Duchies, I think it desirable to give a short account of the negotiations which took place on this subject between Count Benedetti, the French Ambassador at Berlin, and Count Bismarck.

Wishing to be thoroughly impartial, and to evince no bias on either side, I have thought it best to give a short analysis of the negotiations as given by M. Benedetti in his book entitled "*Ma Mission en Prusse*," and the account given in Bismarck's "*Denkwürdigkeiten*," a volume of reminiscences presumably published with his sanction and under his authority.

I leave my readers to form their own judgment

on the course of these negotiations and the parts played by each of the actors.

In M. Benedetti's account of the various phases of the negotiations preceding the war of 1866 no mention is made of any claims for compensation by France till the question is apparently first mentioned in his despatch to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs of June 4th, 1866.* He therein disclaims having had any "secret correspondence" with the Emperor Napoleon, and even complains of having been left in ignorance of the steps taken in concert at Paris by England, France, and Russia, with a view to the convocation of a Conference in order to avert war.

In this despatch M. Benedetti refers to the hopelessness of maintaining peace between Austria and Prussia, and the failure of the hoped-for meeting of a Conference. He further refers to Count Bismarck's wish to have paid a visit to Paris before the war, to confer with the Emperor and M. Drouyn de Lhuys, and to his regret at not being able to do so. He mentions the refusal of the King to cede any portion of the actual territory of Prussia. He says that in the opinion of the King (as stated by Count Bismarck) the compensation for France should be taken wherever French was spoken on the frontier. Count Bismarck had remarked to his Sovereign that before disposing of the territories thus indicated they must first be acquired by conquest. The latter let drop that if France should claim Cologne, Bonn, and Mayence, he

* "Ma Mission en Prusse," page 163 and sequel.

would prefer to retire from the political stage rather than consent to such a demand. M. Benedetti continues to say that without pressing him any further for explanation, Count Bismarck hinted that it was not impossible to prevail on the King to give up to France the province which adjoined Luxembourg—(probably that of Treves, though he did not name it)—whose reunion with France would be favourably received, and this would rectify the frontier to the satisfaction of France.

M. Benedetti continued:—

I confined myself to observing that Luxembourg was no more a province without an owner than Belgium and certain of the Swiss cantons ; and not wishing to allow Count Bismarck to suppose that his combinations would have any chance of being examined at Paris, I broke off the discussion.*

On the 8th of June, 1866, M. Benedetti, in reply to an inquiry from M. Drouyn de Lhuys as to the public opinion in Prussia in regard to France, addressed a despatch in which he informed the Minister that although the fears entertained in Germany of French ambition had much diminished, still they existed, and would be unanimously and deeply aroused at the smallest indication of an intention on the part of France to extend herself towards the Rhine.†

M. Benedetti states that on his return to Berlin

* I may here observe that this conversation reported by M. Benedetti took place a month before the war, when Count Bismarck was uncertain of the attitude of France.

† See Benedetti's Despatch, June 8th, 1866, in "*Ma Mission en Prusse*," page 167.

after his visit to the headquarters of the Prussian army during the first week in August, he received instructions to present to Count Bismarck the draft of a treaty requiring, not merely a rectification of frontier, but the cession of the left bank of the Rhine, including the fortress of Mayence.*

He had, thereupon, two interviews with Count Bismarck, of a courteous nature, in which the latter evinced no inclination to cede Mayence, but insinuated that other engagements might be made to satisfy the respective interests of both countries.

Count Benedetti then started for Paris to confer personally with the Emperor Napoleon and with M. Drouyn de Lhuys, and to report to them the gravity of the position. Subsequent to his arrival the Emperor Napoleon addressed the following letter to the Marquis de la Valette, Minister of the Interior † :—

MY DEAR M. DE LA VALETTE,—I call your attention to the following facts. In the course of a conversation between M. Benedetti and Count Bismarck, M. Drouyn de Lhuys had the idea of sending to Berlin a Draft of Convention on the subject of the compensation to which we may have a right.

This Convention, in my opinion, ought to have remained secret, but it has been noised abroad, and the newspapers go so far as to say that the Rhenish provinces have been refused to us.

It is my conclusion, from my conversation with M. Benedetti, that we should have all Germany against us for a very small benefit.

* See “*Ma Mission en Prusse*,” page 178.

† *Id.*, page 181.

It is important not to allow public opinion to be led astray on this point. Have these rumours energetically contradicted in the newspapers. I am writing in this sense to M. Drouyn de Lhuys. He sends me to-day the "Correspondance Havas," herewith enclosed. The true interest of France is not to obtain an insignificant acquisition of territory, but to assist Germany in constituting herself in the manner most favourable to our interests and to those of Europe.

Receive the assurance of my sincere friendship,

NAPOLÉON.

On the return of M. Benedetti to Berlin he was instructed to close the negotiations which had been opened.

At this time, it appears, commenced his conversations with Count Bismarck with regard to Belgium. But no date is given on the draft of the "secret" treaty, a copy of which was left in Count Bismarck's hands, which copy was in M. Benedetti's handwriting.* This draft secret treaty was published by the *Times* newspaper at the opening of the war with France in 1870. The following is a translation :—

His Majesty the King of Prussia and His Majesty the Emperor of the French, judging it useful to draw closer the bonds of friendship which unite them, and to strengthen the relations of good-neighbourliness happily subsisting between the two countries, convinced, on the other hand, that in order to attain this result, tending besides to the maintenance of the general peace, it is necessary for them to come to an understanding on questions which interest their future relations, have

* Bismarck, "Denkwürdigkeiten," page 729.

resolved to conclude a treaty for that purpose, and have named in consequence

His Majesty

His Majesty

who, having exchanged their full powers, found to be in good and due form, have agreed on the following Articles :—

ARTICLE I.

His Majesty the Emperor of the French admits and recognises the acquisitions which Prussia has made as the result of the late war which she had with Austria and her Allies; as also the arrangements made, or to be made, for the institution of a Confederation of North Germany, engaging at the same time to give his aid to the preservation of this work.

ARTICLE II.

His Majesty the King of Prussia promises to facilitate France in the acquisition of Luxembourg. For this purpose his said Majesty will enter into negotiations with His Majesty the King of the Netherlands to decide him to make the cession of his sovereign rights over this Duchy to the Emperor of the French, by means of such compensation as shall be deemed sufficient or otherwise.

* On his part the Emperor of the French engages to undertake the pecuniary charges which this transaction may occasion.

To facilitate this transaction, the Emperor of the French on his side engages to undertake the pecuniary charges which it may occasion.

ARTICLE III.

His Majesty the Emperor of the French will not oppose a Federal Union of the Northern Confederation with the States

* This portion was struck out, and the parallel phrase (inserted on the margin of the original) was substituted for it.

of Southern Germany, with the exception of Austria, which union might be based on a common parliament, while respecting in just measure the sovereignty of the said States.

ARTICLE IV.

On his part His Majesty the King of Prussia, in case that His Majesty the Emperor of the French should be led by circumstances to cause his troops to enter Belgium, or to make a conquest of it, will grant to France the co-operation of his armies, and he will support her with all his forces by land and sea towards and against any Power that, in such eventuality, may declare war against him.

ARTICLE V.

To ensure the entire execution of the preceding agreements, His Majesty the King of Prussia and His Majesty the Emperor of the French contract by the present treaty an offensive and defensive alliance, which they solemnly engage to maintain.

Their Majesties engage themselves, moreover, and especially, to observe it in all cases where their respective States—the integrity of which they mutually guarantee — should be threatened with attack, holding themselves bound, in such a contingency, to take without delay, and not to decline on any pretext, the military arrangements commanded by their common interest in conformity with the clauses and provisions above declared.

M. Benedetti, in his work,* refers to the revelations of the secret treaty, published in the *Times*, and to the circular of the Prussian Minister in July, 1870. Of the latter he gives the following extract :—

France (said Count Bismarck) never ceased to tempt us by offers at the expense of Germany and of Belgium. I never thought of accepting such offers. I thought it right, in the

* “ Ma Mission en Prusse,” page 183.

interest of peace, to leave the French diplomatists as long as possible under the delusion they had formed, without even making verbal promises. I was, therefore, silent as to their demands, and I negotiated dilatorily. When the negotiations with the King of the Netherlands for the acquisition of Luxembourg fell through, France renewed to me the proposals concerning Belgium and Southern Germany. Then took place the communication of the manuscript of M. Benedetti. It is not likely (adds Count Bismarck) that the French Ambassador should have formulated these proposals in his own handwriting—should have given them to me, and discussed them on various occasions—without the authority of his Sovereign. That the text of this document, written on the French Embassy paper, was in the handwriting of M. Benedetti is confirmed by the Ambassadors of England, Austria, Russia, and others who have seen the original.

“The foregoing,” says M. Benedetti, “is the version of Count Bismarck. The following is my reply :—

It was not necessary to assemble a Congress of Ambassadors as experts of my handwriting. It is in my handwriting, and I do not deny it. The question is—not who is the author of the manuscript, but, what is far different, who is the author of the proposal?

Count Bismarck asserts that this incident took place after the conclusion of the Luxembourg question. The Luxembourg question arose in March, 1867, and was only concluded in June of that year by the Conference in London. The following month* the King of Prussia went to Paris to see the Exhibition, attended by Count Bismarck, who, on his return to Berlin, went to Varzin, where he passed the summer. It is impossible to admit that such an overture, supposing that I had taken the initiative, had been made at Berlin on the eve of the visit of

* The Treaty of London was ratified on May 31st, and King William arrived at Paris on June 5th.

the King and Count Bismarck to Paris ; it is not less impossible to believe that on leaving the Conference of London, and after the close of the negotiations relating to the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg—the annexation of which by France had been resisted by Prussia at the risk of war—we should have proposed to him a combination which would have assured to us the armed support of that Power, not only as regarded Luxembourg, but Belgium besides. When I joined the headquarters of the Prussian army in Moravia, I found Count Bismarck occupied with the project of a ‘secret and exclusive understanding’ with France, which the Emperor’s Government had invariably refused before the war to accept or to discuss. I had never consented to follow Count Bismarck in this track, which my instructions formally forbade me to enter upon.”

The following is the general substance of M. Benedetti’s official report to M. Drouyn de Lhuys, dated Brünn, July 15, 1866 * :—

“ M. de Bismarck pointed out to me the conditions on which the Prussian Ambassador at Paris was instructed to accord the assent of Prussia to the conclusion of an armistice, on the footing of the annexation of Saxony, Electoral Hesse, and Hanover, as authorised by the sacrifices incurred by the war, and the successes Prussia had obtained.”

M. Benedetti states that he replied by observing that we were not living in the days of Frederick the Great, when “ what was right to take, was right to keep,” and that it would be viewed as an abuse of might and victory.

M. de Bismarck then admitted that the instructions to Count Goltz contained nothing absolute, and that the principal object was to effect an agreement with the Government of the Emperor. “ Although ” (continued M. Benedetti) “ I had no instructions or full powers, M. de Bismarck agreed to discuss with me and determine the basis of an armistice, when he would

* “ *Ma Mission en Prusse*, ” page 186.

propose to the King a suspension of hostilities while awaiting the assent of the Emperor's Government. Without any encouragement on my part, he (M. de Bismarck) tried to prove that the defeat of Austria permitted France and Prussia to modify their territorial status, and to solve at once the chief difficulties which menaced Europe. I reminded him that there existed treaties, and that the war which he desired to avert would be the first result of such a policy. M. de Bismarck replied that I was mistaken. That France and Prussia, united and resolved to alter their respective frontiers, and binding themselves by solemn engagements, were in a position to settle these questions without fear of encountering armed resistance either on the part of England or of Russia."

M. Benedetti then proceeds to say that M. de Bismarck's object was evidently to prove that the successes of Prussia became an obstacle to the concessions which might have been ceded on the Rhine before the war. He (Bismarck) added that perhaps compensations might have been found in the Palatinate; and M. Benedetti closes his report to M. Drouyn de Lhuys by saying, "I shall state nothing new to Your Excellency in announcing that M. de Bismarck is of opinion that we must look for compensation in Belgium, and that he had offered to come to an understanding with us upon it."

"It was not the first time" (continues M. Benedetti) "that M. de Bismarck had made this proposal. He had often taken the initiative in terms more or less explicit, and it was what he wished to insinuate not only at Berlin, but especially at Brünn, when he guaranteed that England would neither find it prudent nor useful to her interests to oppose the arrangements which Prussia and France in common would make on the Continent in taking an engagement by a solemn treaty to cause them to be respected by force of arms.*

"M. Drouyn de Lhuys" (continues M. Benedetti—see "*Ma Mission en Prusse*," page 190) "will certainly recollect that during my visit to Paris in 1866—before the war—I

* This Despatch was dated Nikolsburg, July 26th, 1866.

notified the frequent allusions of M. de Bismarck to the reunion of Belgium with France, and even of the Canton of Geneva. This language was not held to me alone. M. de Bismarck expressed himself in a similar sense to M. Lefebvre de Béhaine, who had accompanied me as secretary to the headquarters of the Prussian army in Moravia, whose despatches during my absence at Vienna confirm it.

“On my return to Berlin in August, M. de Bismarck again proposed an alliance in the sense of the arrangements of which he had so often indicated the basis.

“I was then” (M. Benedetti continues) “enabled to inform M. de Bismarck that we gave up the clause of the projected treaty in regard to Mayence, and that he might consider it as *non avenue*, at which he was satisfied; but his repeated efforts to bring about an agreement are a sufficient proof that, in his opinion, it was essential to satisfy (*désintéresser*) France. It was thus after the sudden rupture of the negotiations regarding Mayence that he projected more clearly than he had done before an offensive and defensive alliance between the two countries. He did not mean, however, to assent to an extension of French territory gratuitously; he required our assistance to crown his work by extending the domination of Prussia from the Baltic to the Alps.”

At one of these interviews (M. Benedetti says), “Wishing to give a clear account of these combinations, I consented to transcribe them at his (Bismarck’s) dictation. Some have supposed that M. de Bismarck had only in view to be possessed of a document, the use of which he reserved for an opportune moment. My correspondence sufficiently proves that I never underrated the skilfulness of that statesman; but is it not superfluous to imagine that M. de Bismarck, in renewing his proposal—a proposal which he had taken to Biarritz and to Paris—had no other design? No, the offer on his part was more serious than he wished to believe; while when it is seen from twenty extracts of my correspondence that we had always designated the banks of the Rhine as the only territory where

we could find compensation for the aggrandisement of Prussia, M. de Bismarck had always suggested that we should look for it in the country bordering France and speaking the French language. Thus it was that the reunion of Belgium with France had been from the commencement, and never ceased to be, *an idea* purely Prussian.

“It may be asked why I do not produce, in support of my arguments, my correspondence during the last days of August, 1866. The following is the reason:—Towards the middle of the month, on my departure from Paris, M. Drouyn de Lhuys had resigned. There was, consequently, no Minister for Foreign Affairs. I therefore wrote to M. Rouher* a letter giving an account of my interview with M. de Bismarck, which accompanied the draft of treaty relating to Belgium. This letter, which I wrote to him during the few days of interregnum, was not deposited in the archives of the Foreign Department. But among the papers found at the Tuileries after the 4th of September two letters were discovered—one from M. Rouher, supposed to have been written to M. de Moustier; the other from the Emperor to M. Rouher. The first was as follows:—

“ ‘CERCAY, August 6th, 1866.

“ ‘Count Goltz came to see me to-day. He said that M. de Bismarck desired the immediate recognition of the annexations effected by Prussia up to four millions of population, and asked me to support the private step he had taken in that sense with M. Drouyn de Lhuys. I will meet his wish, and telegraph to the Emperor. I observed to M. de Goltz that this question appeared to me concurrent with that of the rectification of our frontier, and that probably the wish would be expressed to treat them conjointly. My surmises were right. Yesterday the Prussian Ambassador communicated to me the answer of our colleague, who states that a communication in this sense had been made by M. Benedetti to M. de Bismarck, and that

* A personal friend of the Emperor, and an influential member of his Government. (See “Ma Mission en Prusse,” page 195.)

an answer to this suggestion was expected before proceeding further with the negotiation. M. de Goltz considers that our request is legitimate in principle, and that satisfaction should be given to the sole wish of our country, in order to bring about a necessary and fruitful alliance between France and Prussia.

“ ‘ (Signed) ROUHER.’

“ The letter of the Emperor was as follows :—

“ ‘ August 26th, 1866.

“ ‘ MY DEAR M. ROUHER,— I send you the draft of treaty, with my observations on the margin. I must add that, as the Germanic Confederation has ceased to exist, the Federal fortresses constructed against France can no longer belong to the Confederation, but to each State on whose territory they are. Thus Luxembourg to France, Mayence to Prussia, Saar Louis ditto, Landau to Bavaria, Rastadt to Baden, Ulm to Würtemberg.

“ ‘ On the other hand, I believe that Prussia is raising many difficulties with Saxony. Would it not be better for Prussia to annex Saxony, a Protestant country, and to place the King of Saxony on the left bank of the Rhine, a Catholic country? But all this should be hinted in a friendly manner.

“ ‘ The treaty must be kept *secret*. The question of Luxembourg will be known as soon as the negotiations are commenced. It is that which is the most pressing.

“ ‘ (Signed) NAPOLEON.

“ ‘ P.S.—Benedetti can, therefore, with some small changes, accept in principle.’

“ It will be borne in mind ” (continues M. Benedetti) “ that on the 5th of August, 1866, I had submitted to M. de Bismarck the draft of treaty concerning Mayence and the left bank of the Upper Rhine; and M. Rouher, on the 6th, alludes to this communication in the second paragraph of his letter. But what it shows equally, and what it is important to

establish, contrary to the assertion of M. de Bismarck, is, that nobody at Paris thought of making Belgium the subject of necessary compensation to France, which, by the admission of the Prussian Ambassador, was due to France.

“By the letter of the Emperor of the 12th of August to M. de la Valette, it will be seen that on that date I had been instructed to withdraw our project. It was on the 26th of August only that, on my return to Berlin, I was authorised to accept in principle. Accept what? Certainly it could not have been a proposal which, with or without orders, I had initiated at Berlin. It was evidently a combination which was offered to us, and what could M. de Bismarck have offered us if not the arrangement which he had always considered the only and true means of forming a durable alliance? For what reasons had this arrangement no result? For the following:—The observations of the Emperor, noted in the margin of the project, were of a nature to limit our compensation to the acquisition of Luxembourg, and the re-establishment of our frontier of 1814, combined with the maintenance—in a certain measure—of the sovereignty of the South German States, each of which would have charge of their respective fortresses. It was, in fact, declining the combination of M. de Bismarck, while authorising me to accept it as the basis of negotiations. As I have said in a letter which was inserted in the *Journal Officiel* of July 30th, 1870, the King of Prussia himself did not judge it useful to continue these negotiations, and they were abandoned. I have only one error to reproach myself with, and I have not hesitated to avow it—namely, that of not having suspected the use which M. de Bismarck might one day make of the document that I had left in his hands. It was his own work, but written by my hand, and I ought to have been more distrustful. I prefer, however, the part I played in this sad incident to his; and such will be, I am confident, the verdict of public opinion.”

Having now given M. Benedetti's version of the negotiations, and of the “Secret Treaty” he proposed,

I proceed to give Count Bismarck's explanation in reply * :—

“M. Benedetti, in his book ‘Ma Mission en Prusse,’ tries to clear himself, and the Imperial policy which he represented, from the accusation of having striven during the last few years for the incorporation of Belgium with France. With this view Benedetti has not disdained to make an exclusive selection from his own reports, leaving out, under frivolous pretexts, a portion of the most important and decisive despatches. The German *Reichsanzeiger* has filled up this gap by publishing some important papers, and thus placed in their true light the real intentions of Benedetti and his Government.

“The Prussian Foreign Office had made public, at the outbreak of the war with France, some fragments of former ‘secret negotiations’—namely, French proposals which referred to the kingdom of Belgium. Benedetti maintains in his book—appealing to a letter of the Minister Rouher of August 6th—that it results therefrom that no one in Paris had ever thought of making Belgium the object of the claims of France. To this the *Reichsanzeiger* says that ‘M. Benedetti had evidently not known what portions of the secret French archives had fallen into the hands of the Prussian troops during the war, or he would have been more careful in his publications, and not even now have tried to maintain the denials with which the Imperial Government met last year the German statements in regard to the known project for the acquisition of Belgium by France.’ ”

The departure of Count Bismarck and his return to Berlin late in the autumn impeded for the moment further negotiations in 1866.

In the spring of 1867 Benedetti submitted to Count Bismarck a fresh project of treaty, offensive and defensive, between France and Prussia, in which the

* Bismarck, “Denkwürdigkeiten,” page 729.

acquisition of Luxembourg by purchase was to accrue to France ; and in the event of French troops entering and conquering Belgium, Prussia was to assist France with her whole forces by land and sea against any Power declaring war against her. The Emperor, on the other hand, was to recognise the Prussian annexations, and not to oppose the entry of the Southern States into the North German Confederation. This offer was also declined by Count Bismarck—or, rather, for the moment declared impossible.

On the 14th of March Thiers made a violent speech against the unity of Germany ; and on the 19th of March the official Prussian *Gazette* published the Secret Treaties between Prussia and the South German States. At the same time the French Minister at The Hague made the formal demand of the disposal of Luxembourg to France. Dutch diplomacy endeavoured to obtain the assent of the King of Prussia, but he replied by telegraph to The Hague “That he could express no opinion without consulting the other Treaty Powers.”

This arrangement was on the point of succeeding—and the agreement was all but formally concluded* between the Emperor Napoleon and the King of the Netherlands—when a fresh difficulty arose, viz., a discussion in the Reichstag at Berlin on reports concerning a cession of Luxembourg to France. The interpellation was made by M. de Bennigsen, a very influential

* The contract had been settled, but the actual signatures thereto had not been affixed.

member of the Reichstag. It was to the following effect :—

1. Has the Government any knowledge of negotiations between France and the Netherlands in regard to the cession of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg ?

2. Is the Government in the position to inform the Reichstag—in which all parties will unite in resisting every attempt to separate an old German territory from the Fatherland—that they are decided, in union with their Federal allies, to safeguard from all danger the union of the Grand Duchy with Germany, and especially the Prussian right of garrisoning the fortress ?

Count Bismarck's reply was somewhat dubious and evasive, raising doubts as to the position of Luxembourg since the dissolution of the Germanic Diet, and stating that there was no desire on the part of the population to enter the North German Confederation.

The Luxembourg question was subsequently treated and satisfactorily concluded by a Conference of the European Powers—assembled at the initiative of Russia—in London. The King of the Netherlands remained in the Sovereign possession of the Grand Duchy, and Luxembourg remained in the German Customs Union (Zollverein). The neutrality of the Grand Duchy was recognised and guaranteed, and the fortress dismantled.

With reference to a statement, on French authority, that M. Benedetti had written the draft of the Secret Treaty at the dictation of Count Bismarck, His Excellency remarked to me that it was written on French paper, or, at all events, on paper not in use at the Prussian Foreign Office ; and that if written in his room and under his dictation, M. Benedetti would not

have brought with him his own sheet of paper. He said that M. Benedetti brought the text with him, and read it to him.

In Article I. Count Bismarck observed to me that he had taken exception to the "phrase by which the sanction and support of France was offered to Prussia for the maintenance of the North German Confederation." He said Prussia could never be beholden to France for her future position in Germany, and that no German Minister could accept such a position. It was then that M. Benedetti consented to leave out this paragraph, and he put the parenthesis in pencil.

In Article II. Count Bismarck said that the King of Prussia could not be a party to persuade the King of Holland to cede the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg to France, and that the correction in this article was then made by M. Benedetti in pencil.

Count Bismarck then added that M. Benedetti left his draft in his hands to show it to the King, and forgot apparently to reclaim it. He (Bismarck) had always maintained the French Government in the delusive hopes of some arrangement being concluded in the interest of peace, being convinced that if a decided negative were given, a rupture with France would have been the immediate consequence. He had hoped that in the course of time the French Government would discover the wisdom of abandoning these ambitious projects, and that war might be thus averted. From the day when the French Government perceived that

the hopes in which they had indulged were illusory, their determination for war was taken.

At an interview I had with Count Bismarck on July 29th, 1870, His Excellency gave an interesting narrative of the various phases through which the annexationist projects of the French Government had passed, and of the personal communications which he had had with the Emperor Napoleon in regard to them. The latter commenced in 1855,* in which year he first became acquainted with the Emperor Napoleon.

On this occasion the Emperor had asked Bismarck to report to his Sovereign (then Frederick William IV.) the offer of an alliance with France. His Majesty then stated to him that it was a mistake to suppose that he (the Emperor) was ill-disposed to Prussia. On the contrary, he was anxious to see Prussia enlarged, and more especially to see her become a maritime Power which, in conjunction with France and the second-rate maritime Powers, would be enabled to cope with England. He wished for the independence of the seas, and that no one Power should be mistress on that element. He proposed to Bismarck to take Hanover, and to annex the Elbe Duchies to Prussia, as a means of increasing her maritime strength. He then said that his first object was to liberate Italy, and to subjugate Austria.

This, remarked Count Bismarck to me, was the

* It was in the autumn of 1855, during Queen Victoria's visit to France, that Bismarck first met Napoleon III.

reason why France played that dubious course at the time of the Danish Conference in London.

Count Bismarck replied to the Emperor that he was glad he had spoken to him, and not to the Prussian Minister at Paris. He could not advise him to make any such proposal to his Sovereign. The King, he declared, would reject it with indignation, and the very fact of its being made and rejected would be sure to be known, when either Prussia would be accused "*d'une trahison préméditée*" or "*d'un affront.*" He advised the Emperor, "*de ne pas s'embourber dans une pareille affaire.*" The word "*embourber*" struck the Emperor, and was made use of afterwards by him.

The Emperor renewed this offer of an alliance, offensive and defensive, with Prussia in 1865. Count Bismarck said that he had in his possession documents and letters to prove the authenticity of the facts he had mentioned.

The price demanded by France for her alliance was a high one. She required the whole territory between the Moselle and the Rhine, forming a triangle, but without the fortresses of either Coblenz or Mayence.

For this Prussia was to receive an increase of territory comprising eight millions of population.

Since that period, said Count Bismarck, the French proposals have been renewed in one form or another on various occasions, among them on the visit of Prince Napoleon to Berlin, and on the passage through Berlin of General Fleury.

Count Bismarck stated that at his interview with

the Emperor at Biarritz, just before the war with Austria, he was never alone with the Emperor, who apparently wished to avoid any reference to previous negotiations or proposals. From the early commencement he had always endeavoured to keep the French Government “at bay”—(his expression was “*le bec dans l'eau*”)—giving no decided answer, and wishing, above all things, to prevent a rupture, which would have been inevitable if the French aspirations had received the shock of a decided refusal.

On the 30th of July I informed Lord Granville confidentially that on the evening before Count Bismarck had stated to a few friends in his salon that he “had just received, through a secret agent, a proposal from France”—(I was not certain whether from the Emperor or his Government)—“that if Prussia would guarantee Belgium to France, the South German States, including Bavaria, should be annexed to Prussia, and that by this arrangement war would be averted.”

Count Bismarck was reported to have expressed himself in very indignant terms at this proposal, and to have said that it was wholly unacceptable—“*rather an honourable war*” were his words.

I observed to Lord Granville that in times of agitation rumours of a most exaggerated nature were in constant circulation, and that it required great care to separate the “wheat from the tares.” In this case, however, it was my duty to report what reached me from a source in which I placed confidence.

I fear that I have somewhat wearied my readers

in entering so fully into the polemic between M. Benedetti and Count Bismarck as to the authorship of the proposed "secret treaty," and I am not disposed to adjudicate between the two. But I will observe that the person who drew up the articles of the "secret treaty" in his own handwriting—the original of which was published in 1870—must necessarily bear the *primâ-facie* attribution of its authorship.

The ambitious projects of the Emperor Napoleon are undeniable. He appeared to think that the days of conquest existed in Europe as in the Middle Ages, and that countries and populations could be handed over, *volentes volentes*, to a new ruler, like so much merchandise! It amounted in principle to an ignominious traffic in human flesh, and to a degradation of the civilisation which distinguishes this enlightened age.

I consider also that when negotiations and proposals of this ambitious character have been pursued during a series of years, an equal responsibility rests on those who make and those who entertain and discuss them. How ever laudable Count Bismarck's objects may have been in the cause of peace, they would be judged as more sincere, and less open to dubious interpretation, if His Excellency had, from the commencement of his temptations, responded to the tempter with more decision and firmness.

In regard to the precipitate publication of the "secret treaty" by Count Bismarck in the *Times* newspaper, I may relate the following anecdote:—

On arriving at the palace at Potsdam on July 24th,

1870, to attend the christening of the infant Princess, daughter of the Crown Prince and Princess, Count Bismarck took me aside, and asked me whether I had sent a telegram to Lord Granville on the subject of Belgium. I answered immediately, "Yes, I had." My telegram was in cypher, and my first impression was that Count Bismarck must have had the decipher, to have obtained this information. He then said, "If you had come to me previously, I would have given you the correct information on the subject."

I replied that there were two reasons for my not doing so—first, because it was very doubtful to me whether His Excellency would have responded; and, secondly, that I never exposed myself to a rebuff by asking an unauthorised question on a subject of some delicacy.

Count Bismarck then said he regretted on my account that I had not done so, for he would have shown me the draft of a secret treaty in M. Benedetti's own handwriting, proposing an offensive and defensive alliance with Prussia at the cost of Belgium. "You would then have been in the position of first giving to your Government this important intelligence," whereas now he had sent it to the "*Times* newspaper, and it would appear in that paper the following day."

I replied that it was of no consequence to me through what medium this information reached Her Majesty's Government, so long as it was made public.

I ascertained later that it was Baron Nothomb, the

Belgian Minister, who informed Count Bismarck of my telegram. 'This relieved my fears as to my cypher. When the King of the Belgians was at Berlin, I promised His Majesty to communicate to his Minister any intelligence I received affecting Belgian interests. I therefore informed Baron Nothomb of the telegram I had addressed to Lord Granville, and the foregoing was the result of the confidence I had placed in him. It is fortunate, perhaps, that the incident occurred, as otherwise Count Bismarck might not have published his "Revelations."

I close this chapter of "surprises" with the following anecdote:—At Berlin Count Bismarck always wore a general's uniform, and there was a table in an ante-room on which his helmet was placed. After a dinner at Count Bismarck's, M. Benedetti approached this table, and took up the helmet. On replacing it, he observed, "*Décidément il a la tête plus forte que moi,*" an observation which subsequent events proved to be too true.

CHAPTER VI.

Conversation with an American Traveller on Question of War-Indemnity claimed by America, and with General McDowell, commanding the Californian Department—General Manteuffel's Special Mission to St. Petersburg—Retirement of M. Drouyn de Lhuys—Appointment of the Marquis de Moustier—Arrival at Berlin of the Prince of Wales—Conversation with the King on Private Fortune of King of Hanover—Appointment of Count Beust—Count Wimpffen, Austrian Minister at Berlin—His Cordial Reception by the King—Recognition of Prince Charles of Hohenzollern as Prince of Roumania—General Thanksgiving for the Restoration of Peace—Dotations to Distinguished Generals—Royal *Chasse* at Königs Wusterhausen—Preparation for German Parliament—Opening of It by the King—The Federal Constitution—Observations on It.

IN the autumn of 1866 I met at Berlin an American traveller of distinction who had returned from Russia, where he had been received with great hospitality. It is somewhat remarkable, but noteworthy, that a great affinity and sympathy exists between Russia and America, notwithstanding the absolute autocratic character of the one and the free Republican institutions of the other; but I suppose it is on the principle of the French maxim—" *Que les deux extrêmes se touchent.*" My American friend was very intelligent—(what the Americans term "cute")—and very observant. I asked him whether there was any foundation for the reported wish of the United States to acquire a naval port in the Mediterranean. He denied this, but said their object was to obtain coaling-stations both

in that sea and other parts. He spoke enthusiastically of Russia as the only and natural ally of America. He expressed his conviction that the Emperor (Alexander II.) was devoted to peace, and that nothing save necessity would induce him to engage in war. But he said that Russia, with eighty millions of population, could not be shut out from the sea, and that she would, and must, sooner or later, annul the provisions of the Treaty of Paris, which hampered the freedom of her maritime action in the Black Sea and Mediterranean.

In referring to the Fenian movement in America, he observed that it was carried on for two motives—out of opposition to the President, and out of spite against England. He did not, however, seem to fear that it would lead to any serious results. He spoke of Mexico as sure to return to her former government. The position of the Emperor Maximilian was no longer tenable. If the engagements of the Emperor Napoleon to withdraw his troops were not carried out in the following year, no Government in America could keep back the popular movement, and the French would be summoned to quit.

My American friend also said that our Government had committed a fault in not accepting arbitration on the subject of the war claims. He said that whoever had been the arbitrator, he would have been more disposed towards England than towards America, for America had few friends; and, further, that by this mode the question would have been shelved, and withdrawn from the influence of popular clamour in

America. This subject appeared to me to involve two distinct questions—that of right and that of expediency. It is possible to forego a right on grounds of expediency without abandoning the principle on which that right is founded, but elasticity in this respect must not be interpreted as weakness.

I confess I could never understand why Lord Russell so persistently refused the American offer of arbitration. In writing to Lord Stanley on this subject, in consequence of my conversation with the American gentleman to whom I have referred, I stated that the question was of considerable importance to our future relations with the Government of the United States. They claimed to have a grievance against us. They offered to submit it to arbitration. We, through Lord Russell, declined absolutely. It appeared to me that this conclusion was unjust in principle and wrong in practice. It was constituting ourselves both judge and jury in a case in which two parties were equally concerned. It was leaving a wound unclosed. It was shutting a door to conciliation and the removal of that angry feeling between two great nations which, if not satisfactorily effaced, would, on some favourable opportunity, endanger the friendly relations between the two countries.

It is to the late Earl of Derby (when Lord Stanley) that was owing the amicable arrangement with the United States of this thorny question, which restored the harmonious feeling between the two nations, and was hailed with satisfaction by the American people. It

is never wise to allow a feeling of animosity to be engendered between two nations from a supposed injury and to ignore such a feeling, when by early treatment it could be appeased and eradicated, as was happily effected by Lord Stanley in the instance under notice.

When crossing America in 1879 I dined with the late General McDowell, commanding the Californian Department, a very distinguished officer. In conversation with him on the *Alabama* question, he highly praised the act of the British Government in submitting it to arbitration, and he expressed in strong terms the duty of the United States Government to refund to England the balance of the sum which had not been disbursed to settle the American claims. He said it was a debt of honour due to England, and as a patriotic American he trusted that his Government would recognise the justice of doing so. I do not recollect what was the amount of the surplus, but it was something considerable, nor do I know whether it has been refunded.

Immediately after the Austro-Prussian War, and on the day following the official demand made by M. Benedetti for compensation to France, General Manteuffel was called by telegraph to Berlin to proceed on a special mission to St. Petersburg.

This mission created at the time some sensation, especially in the mind of the French Ambassador.

The fact really was that the successes of 1866 had awakened some jealousy on the part of Prince Gortschakoff and the Russian Government; and the dissolution of the Germanic Diet, which had been an

European creation, as also the deposition of the King of Hanover and other German princes, was not viewed with satisfaction at St. Petersburg.

Russia had then proposed an European Congress with a view to the restoration of the balance of power. It was necessary, therefore, to calm and conciliate her, and, further, to be assured that, in the event of a future war, the neutrality of Russia could be relied upon. What was really effected, or what price was offered, of course was kept secret; but the result was satisfactory, for, on the return of General Manteuffel, the demand of an European Congress was dropped, the annexations made by Prussia were regarded as *des faits accomplis*, and the former intimacy between the two Courts was renewed.

In the August of 1866 a change occurred in the French Foreign Department. M. Drouyn de Lhuys was replaced by the Marquis de Moustier, previously Minister at Berlin and Ambassador at Vienna. The change was not displeasing to Count Bismarck, from the fact that M. Drouyn de Lhuys was known to be more disposed towards Austria and the South German States than he was to Prussia; and it was said that during the illness of the Emperor he had advanced the question of compensation to France without the Emperor's knowledge or sanction.

I had personally known the Marquis de Moustier at Berlin during the Crimean War, and subsequently at Vienna. He was clever, sagacious, a good speaker and writer, but naturally indolent and a man of

pleasure. When Minister for Foreign Affairs at Paris, he was rarely to be found, and acquired the sobriquet of “*Le Ministre introuvable*.” In society M. de Moustier was easy, agreeable, and attractive. He was connected by marriage with the great family of the Merodes in Belgium, the leaders of the Ultramontane party; but he was Liberal in his opinions, and not under any religious influences. We lived on very friendly—I might say intimate—terms, and I retain pleasurable recollections of him.

M. Drouyn de Lhuys was a man of a different stamp. He belonged to the party of historical traditions, and was averse to the disturbance of the European equilibrium to the disadvantage of France. He was, therefore, in favour of demanding a territorial compensation from Prussia as a counterpoise to the aggrandisement she had lately made, and of enforcing it by war if necessary, in the delusive hope of the aid of Austria and Southern Germany.

If we look back on the Imperial policy, we find that the Emperor Napoleon never undertook a war in Europe without having secured an ally, and without previously isolating his opponent.

In the Marquis de Moustier the Emperor Napoleon found a Minister less independent than M. Drouyn de Lhuys, and more subservient to his will.

On the 4th of November the Prince of Wales arrived at Berlin, on his way to St. Petersburg to attend the marriage of the Csesarevitch to Princess Dagmar of Denmark.

His Royal Highness stopped at Potsdam, and proceeded to the New Palace, the summer residence of the Crown Prince and Princess. His Royal Highness visited the King at three o'clock, who received him with great cordiality at Babelsberg. He then proceeded to Sans Souci to visit the Queen-Dowager.

A dinner was given to His Royal Highness by the Crown Prince and Princess, at which the King was present as a mark of respect to the Prince, although His Majesty had already dined with the Queen-Dowager at the usual Sunday dinner to all the members of the Royal Family.

Lady Augustus and myself, with Colonel Walker, the military Attaché, were honoured with invitations to dine with the Crown Prince and Princess.

Nothing could exceed the kind and affectionate interest manifested by the King towards the Prince of Wales. His Royal Highness left Berlin by the night train for St. Petersburg, having expressed himself much gratified by his visit to Potsdam.

In a conversation with His Majesty after dinner, I took the opportunity to refer to the question of the private fortune of the King of Hanover. I stated to His Majesty that the interest evinced by Her Majesty's Government in this question, independently of the fact of the King of Hanover's being nearly related to the Royal Family of England, was dictated by a wish to render mutual service both to His Majesty and to the King of Hanover, and that I should be happy if I could in any way assist

in bringing this delicate question to a satisfactory solution.

His Majesty replied that he fully appreciated the motives of Her Majesty's Government, and expressed his thanks for their kind offices. His Majesty referred to the circumstances preceding the war, and to the fatal line of policy pursued by the King of Hanover, observing that it had been furthest from his intentions to deprive any of the German Sovereigns of their possessions, and that, at the time to which he referred, he had offered them his alliance, and to guarantee to them the security of their States. The King of Hanover, however, chose a different path, and had made war against him. His Majesty stated with much feeling that it was only after the severest inward struggle with his own feelings that he had assented to a measure which had caused him the deepest pain, and which necessity alone had imposed on him.

His Majesty observed that the King of Hanover and the Elector of Hesse were the Sovereigns most nearly allied to him, and that it was not without a pang he had found himself obliged to adopt the course he had taken.

His Majesty then observed that the King of Hanover had complained that a letter which he had forwarded to him at Nikolsburg by an aide-de-camp had been returned unopened; "but," said His Majesty, "we were in a state of war, and it was impossible for me, under these circumstances, to receive a letter from the King of Hanover, and to enter into negotiations with him."

His Majesty then confirmed what M. de Thile had been charged to communicate to me—namely, that His Majesty could enter into no negotiations with the King of Hanover on the subject of his private fortune until he should have released his army from their oath of allegiance to him. “When that condition is fulfilled,” said His Majesty, “it is my wish to act liberally and generously towards the King of Hanover and his family.”

The King referred to a fund which he seemed to consider as not forming part of the private property of the King of Hanover, but as belonging to the State. I replied that I was not conversant with the details of the private property of the King, and therefore could not give His Majesty any information thereon. I added that the object I had in view was to arrange, if possible, a basis of agreement, leaving the details to be worked out by an agent of the King of Hanover in direct negotiation with His Majesty’s Government.

The King expressed his approval of this course, and at the same time authorised me to inform Her Majesty’s Government that he could enter into no negotiations until the King of Hanover had released his subjects, and more especially his army, from their oath of allegiance.

Shortly after the conclusion of the war an important change took place in the Austrian Ministry—namely, the appointment of Count Beust, former Premier of Saxony, as Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs. He was, no doubt, a man of great ability and resource, and

proved this by the manner in which he carried through the final arrangement of reconciliation with Hungary by the inauguration of the dual system of government. As was natural, his appointment was not well received in Austria, from his being a stranger and a Protestant, but these qualities at the time proved rather of utility than the contrary. As a foreigner he was uninfluenced by local bias, and free to pursue the course which he conscientiously believed to be for the interests of Austria. As a Protestant he was enabled to act with thorough impartiality, without being subjected to the clerical influences then dominant at Vienna, and without incurring the distrust or animosity of the dominant Church. By the accomplishment of the dual government with Hungary, he achieved what all his predecessors had failed in effecting—namely, a thorough reconciliation with that kingdom, which obliterated all discontent so effectually that at his Majesty's coronation the Hungarians received their Sovereign with the most enthusiastic loyalty.

At Berlin the appointment of Count Beust was received with some surprise, and some alarm for the future relations between Austria and Prussia, because of the antagonism he had always evinced against Prussia, but subsequently it became a matter of indifference; and the pacific professions which Count Beust expressed in his Circular tended, in some measure, to dispel the fears to which his appointment had given rise. I was officially informed that his language to Baron Werther, the Prussian Minister at Vienna, was very satisfactory,

and quite in consonance with the hopes and wishes of the Prussian Government.

Under the existing circumstances, it was evident that the policy of Prussia towards Austria would be one of expectancy. There was a sincere wish on the part of the King and his Government to renew cordial relations with Austria; but until the future policy of Count Beust should be developed, the Prussian Government maintained a position of reserve, and confined itself to the part of a watchful observer of events.

About this time Count Bismarck's health had given cause for anxiety. The strain on his nervous system, and the effects of an overworked brain during a long crisis of unparalleled gravity, were now telling on his robust frame. He went for change of air and complete repose to the island of Rügen, which, happily for his country, produced a beneficial effect, and hopes were entertained that he would shortly be restored to his former activity of mind and body.

Count Wimpffen, the newly-accredited Austrian Minister, presented his credentials to the King on the 6th of November, and was very graciously received by His Majesty, who expressed, in very warm terms, his sincere wish that the past should be buried in oblivion, and that the former relations of goodwill and cordiality should be restored. He expressed also his regret that the relations had been interrupted, adding that even during the war he had never ceased to bear personally the most friendly feelings towards the Emperor.

Count Wimpffen stated that the last words spoken

to him by the Emperor were to charge him to assure His Majesty of his sincere desire to restore and maintain the most friendly relations with Prussia.

The recognition of Prince Charles of Hohenzollern as Prince of Roumania now occupied the attention of the European Powers.

The question had arisen whether a Conference should be called at Paris of the signatory Powers to the Treaty of 1856, in order to confirm by protocol the election of Prince Charles by the united provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia, with hereditary succession, which constituted a departure from the terms of that treaty. Prince Gortschakoff, however, dissented from this view, and declined to accede to any revival of that Conference on the Principalities question, thus establishing (as I represented to Lord Stanley) a precedent for a violation of the Treaty of 1856, without a legal and confirmatory act collectively by the signatory Powers. It appeared to me both an irregular and dangerous proceeding, as it afterwards proved, for it enabled Prince Gortschakoff in 1871 to break loose from the Treaty of 1856, and to repudiate the Article of that treaty relating to the Black Sea, without any previous reference to the signatory Powers.

The recognition of Prince Charles was separately agreed to by the several Powers parties to the Treaty of 1856, having been previously confirmed by the Sultan.

A general thanksgiving throughout Prussia for the restoration of peace was ordered by the King,

and on the day appointed His Majesty, accompanied by all the members of the Royal Family, attended a divine service at the garrison church, at the conclusion of which a salute of a hundred and one guns was fired in honour of the occasion. Two rescripts were addressed by the King to the Ministers of War and of the Interior—one conveying his thanks to all classes of the nation for the solicitude everywhere evinced to the wounded of his victorious army; the other expressing his satisfaction at the cordial reception given to his troops on their return to their respective garrisons.

This may be viewed as the concluding act of a war unparalleled in the annals of history for the shortness of its duration and the magnitude of its results.

A motion was submitted by the Finance Minister to the Legislative Chamber, by order of the King, empowering His Majesty to grant dotations to the generals who had most distinguished themselves during the late war. The sum mentioned was one and a half million thalers (about £225,000), to be taken from the war indemnity paid to Prussia. Some difference of opinion was expressed as to whether the names of the distinguished generals should be inserted, with the amount to be allotted to them, on the ground of the grant being a national one, or whether the appointment should be left wholly to the King; but there was no dissentient voice as to the measure itself, nor as to the amount asked for. It was finally decided to empower the King to apportion the sum asked for between Count

Bismarck, Generals von Roon, von Steinmetz, Herwarth von Bittenfeld, von Moltke, and von Falkenstein.

In acknowledgment of the services rendered by the Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha during the war, the King ceded to him the forests in the district of Schmalkade, to form an integral part of the entailed private property of the house of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. These forests are said to afford the best shooting in Germany.

The Prince of Wales arrived in Berlin on the 1st of December on his return journey from St. Petersburg. Shortly after leaving Königsberg the royal saloon of the train caught fire from being overheated. Fortunately the train was near to a station, and no further inconvenience was caused than that of obliging His Royal Highness to change carriages.

On December 1st I waited on His Royal Highness to present my felicitations on the anniversary of the Princess of Wales's birthday. His Royal Highness appeared to have greatly enjoyed his trip. Nothing could exceed the kind attentions he had received from the Emperor and Empress and Imperial Family. I may here observe that by His Royal Highness's extreme tact and amiability, by his dignified bearing and ingratiating manners, he has acquired a popularity in every country and at every Court which he has visited, which has been rarely, if ever, accorded to a royal prince, and which in many cases has been of intrinsic value to his country.

Count Benedetti and I were invited by the King to a *chasse* at Königs Wusterhausen. It is an old royal

château, surrounded by forests where wild boar and deer abound. It was the residence of Frederick the Great in his youthful days, and is mentioned in his correspondence with the Margravine of Baireuth. It is a curious specimen of the architecture of that day. We had to start early for the *chasse*. At midday we lunched *al fresco*, and were regaled with luxury. Count Bismarck, who was an ardent and experienced sportsman, was of the party, and I was glad to see him in renovated health. We had an early dinner on our return. There was no formality, no white neckcloth, no politics—conviviality and gaiety reigned supreme, and no one was more youthful or cheery than His Majesty, who had a pleasant word for every one of his guests. I forget the total of wild boars and deer slaughtered, but they appeared a large number when exposed to view at luncheon-time. The weather being cold, we lunched the second day within doors at one of the foresters' houses; it was a gorgeous feast, and admirably served. On our return to the château we were instructed to appear in travelling costume, and after an early dinner we returned with the King by special train to Berlin.

Count Bismarck appeared quite rejuvenated. He ate, drank, smoked, shot, and walked as well as the youngest of the party, and bore equally well the vicissitudes of rain, sleet, wind, and snow. It was altogether a most enjoyable excursion, and nobody could be more gracious than the King was, both to Count Benedetti and myself. I have never met anyone,

much less a Sovereign, endowed with such innate amiability and such benignant kindness of heart as evinced by His Majesty.

Count Bismarck had now a very difficult and important task before him. The period of "demolition" was past. The moment had arrived for "reconstruction," and for harmonising the various component parts of the new Confederation. This, together with organising the newly-acquired provinces and blending them with Prussia, was a task of no easy execution, requiring consummate skill and statesmanship.

The convocation of the North German Federal Parliament, or Reichstag, was looked forward to with intense interest by all classes of the population, and it was felt by all parties to be of the greatest importance that it should assemble with the least delay.

Commissaries of the several States forming the North German Confederation were convoked to meet at Berlin to confer with the Prussian Government on the general basis of the Federal Constitution to be submitted to the German Parliament.

There were at this time two distinct political parties in Prussia and in Northern Germany. The one party, which may be termed the Prussian party, were of opinion that Prussia, having been greatly enlarged by the late war, should consolidate herself, and be satisfied with holding the supreme military command, with the diplomatic representation and commercial supremacy of North Germany extending to the Main; and they were willing to leave to another generation the task of

completing the work they had commenced. They had no great confidence in the destinies of the German Parliament, and regarded it as a popular banner which was raised before the war for special purposes, but which was no longer required. This party viewed it rather as an experiment which might assist Prussia in obtaining a complete ascendancy in Northern Germany, and, should it fail to do so, this ascendancy would be equally assured to her by her superior military position.

They were content that Southern Germany should hold aloof, and form a separate Confederation, in the belief that, at no distant day, the force of events and of necessity would unite it with the Northern Confederacy.

Their present care was to maintain for Prussia what she had then acquired, and to leave to a propitious future the final completion of German unity. This party might be termed more especially the Conservative and purely Prussian party, and its opinions and principles were represented by the *Kreuz Zeitung*.

The other party was composed of all shades of Liberals, from the most moderate to the most advanced. They were also in favour of Prussian aggrandisement and of Prussian supremacy, but had likewise a larger object in view—namely, the unity of Germany. While the Conservative party were striving for a Northern Federal Confederation under Prussia, the Liberal party were aspiring to an United Germany under Prussia. They considered the present aggrandisement of Prussia as merely a step in the right direction,

and as leading naturally to an agglomeration of all Germany under Prussia.

This party was not influenced by any fears as to the result. On the contrary, they were prepared to carry out their views at all risks for the purpose of finishing what the late war had left incomplete.

These were the two parties who would stand face to face in the German Parliament, and by whom the future destinies of the Fatherland were to be moulded.

It will thus be seen how great were the difficulties of the task which devolved on Count Bismarck in framing the future Constitution for the North German Confederation. It was a herculean task; it required all the firmness of will and the tact of an experienced statesman to accomplish, and these Count Bismarck eminently displayed.

It was agreed by Prussia with the several Governments of the States of the North German Confederation that they should decree, concurrently with Prussia, the election of Deputies to the North German Parliament on the basis of the Electoral Law of the 12th of April, 1849, passed by the Parliament of Frankfort. The principle of this law was universal suffrage, and it was submitted to the sanction of the Prussian Legislative Chamber on the 12th of September, 1866.

I once asked Count Bismarck why, in framing the Electoral Law, he had adopted the principle of universal suffrage. He replied that he was placed between two alternatives. He must either have proposed to pay the Deputies, or he must have adopted the principle

of universal suffrage; and of the two alternatives he preferred the latter.

On the question of paying the Deputies of the Reichsrath Count Bismarck's negative was firm and immovable. When it was hinted to him by one of the influential members of the Parliament that perhaps he was bound to this line by a higher authority, Count Bismarck replied that "if the King commanded him to agree to the payment of members, he would not remain Minister an hour longer." *

Plenipotentiaries of the allied States met at Berlin to draw up, with the co-operation of Prussia, a Federal Constitution, which should be submitted, after approval by the Prussian Landtag, to the Federal Parliament for its deliberation and sanction.

On the 12th of February, 1867, the elections for the Reichstag took place. On the 24th of February the first Parliament of the North German Confederation was opened by the King in the White Hall of the Royal Palace. The King was attended by all the Royal Princes and great officers of State and the Plenipotentiaries of the allied States members of the Federal Council. It was an eventful day for Germany, for which the hopes of German patriots had long yearned; and although their national aspirations had only been partially realised, the occasion was regarded as the harbinger of the unity of Germany.

The basis on which the Federal Constitution was founded was as follows:—

* Bismarck, "Denkwürdigkeiten."

1. The Presidency, which was vested in the Sovereign of Prussia, with the right of appointing the Chancellor.

2. The Federal Council, which was composed of members appointed to represent the Governments of the allied States, of which the Chancellor was the head. Forty-three votes were accorded to the members of the Council, of which Prussia had seventeen, Saxony four, Mecklenburg and Brunswick two each, and the other States one each.

3. The Reichstag, or Parliament, elected by universal suffrage, representing the people.

These three factors formed the three estates of the North German Confederation.

I will not weary my readers with going into the details of the Constitution, but I will confine myself to making a few observations on three principal points which may interest them.

First, in regard to the title of "President." It had a Republican "sound," which was not pleasing to the ears of the King, and the use of it was invariably avoided, if possible. But there was no other title that he could assume. That of "German Emperor" (subsequently accorded in 1870 by all the German Sovereigns and reigning Princes) would not have been appropriate, as the North German Confederation only comprised the North German States to the Main, and did not include, therefore, all Germany.

The title of "King" could hardly be adopted, as there was a King of Saxony and other Sovereign Princes members of the Confederation, which would, in the

eyes of their subjects, have placed them in a position of inferiority, and infringed their Sovereign rights, amounting, in fact, to mediatisation. It was a delicate and difficult point to solve, and it would not have been politic to have raised a mere question of form at the moment of installing the Confederation. Hence the title of "President" was adopted ; but in the minds of most German patriots it was regarded as of a provisional character until the Imperial title should be substituted for it—as it was hoped, at no distant day.

In regard to the non-creation of an Upper House, it was considered desirable to avoid an increase in the number of the legislative factors, both on account of the friction and confusion which would have resulted from these, and would have hampered the transaction of public business ; and also on account of the difficulties which would have resulted in its formation, in the mode of its composition, and in the selection of its members. The members of the Federal Council appointed by the Governments of each of the allied States were considered, as a body, to fill the place of an Upper House, and as such they exercised their voting powers. On the other hand, the members of the Reichstag were the representatives of the people, elected by universal suffrage, acting independently of the Governments. The legislative powers being thus equally balanced, there was no need of an Upper Chamber.

With respect to the absence in the Federal Constitution of a responsible Federal Ministry, it was considered advisable to invest the Chancellor of the

Confederation with the duties appertaining to it. A separate Ministry would have produced endless embarrassment. It would have caused chaos and confusion where union and vigour were indispensable, but would have been unattainable if the Ministerial power had been vested in diverse hands.. All these points were raised and fully discussed by the Landtag and the Reichstag; and the Constitution, as originally proposed, was accepted by both Parliamentary bodies with some trivial amendments. After receiving the approval of the Legislatures of the allied States, it was officially published, and has worked efficiently.

The Customs Union or Zollverein, including the South German States, was renewed, and a new treaty was entered into with those States on the 8th of July, 1867. Thus both in the North German Confederation and in the Southern States political and commercial affairs progressed in the most hopeful manner.

Thus was realised, after years of anxious expectation, the unity of the larger portion of Germany under one Legislature, giving strength and vitality to the nation both externally and internally. It was the partial accomplishment of the national aspirations which had given rise to the revolutionary disturbances of 1848, and which had been still more unmistakably exemplified in the debates of the National Assembly at Frankfort. It was brought about, not by revolutionary means, nor by the physical forces of the people, but by the calmer and wiser judgment of statesmen, confiding in the sound sense, intelligence, and patriotism of all classes of the

nation. It was the distinct result of a successful war on Prussia's part against the weaker States, and was in effect the fulfilment of Bismarck's policy of "blood and iron." This eventful period will be looked upon by future generations as the commencement of the golden era which has resuscitated Germany, and which was destined in a few years to restore the German Empire, and to raise it to the commanding position it now holds in the councils of Europe.

CHAPTER VII.

Pacific Disposition of the King and Government—Visits of Crown Prince of Denmark and King and Crown Prince of Saxony—Black Eagle conferred on Benedetti—Jubilee Festival of the King's Sixty Years of Military Service—Visit of the Count of Flanders—Question of Luxembourg—Relations of Prussia and Holland—General Approval of King's Speech on Opening First Session of North German Parliament—King's Birthday—Audience of His Majesty—Arrival of King of the Belgians—Marriage of Count of Flanders and Princess Hohenzollern—Conversation with the King on Luxembourg—Interview with Count Bismarck—He was in Favour of Peace and a Conference—Meeting and Conclusion of London Conference—On General Disarmament—Death of Emperor Maximilian of Mexico—Exhibition at Paris—Visit to Paris of Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia—State Dinner given by the King on the Queen's Birthday—Prince Oscar of Sweden—Observations on Visits of Sovereigns to Paris Exhibition—Military Review at Paris—Attempt on the Czar's Life by a Pole—His Merciful Escape—Emperor of Austria crowned King of Hungary.

THE year 1866, after the termination of the war, with its momentous results, ended in a more peaceful and hopeful manner than it had commenced, although there were still many heart-burnings and disappointments which had left their traces behind, and which still clouded the political horizon.

The Prussian Government were absorbed with framing the Constitution of the North German Confederation, and with the organisation of the newly-acquired provinces, and it was of essential importance that both should be carried out with the least delay. The King and his Government were anxious in every way to heal the wounds caused by the late war, and to

maintain the most friendly relations with France. The King conferred on M. Benedetti (who had been raised to the dignity of a Count) the Order of the Black Eagle, the highest decoration in Prussia.

The Crown Prince of Denmark, who had been to St. Petersburg to attend the marriage of the Czarévitch with Princess Dagmar of Denmark, was specially invited by the King to Berlin, where he was received with great cordiality. The King conferred on him the Order of the Black Eagle, and charged him to deliver the same decoration to the King of Denmark with suitable compliments from His Majesty.

The King and Crown Prince of Saxony also visited their Prussian Majesties, and were received with every mark of distinction and regard. It appears that the initiative to this visit was taken by the King of Saxony, and that it was cordially responded to by the King of Prussia. It was generally viewed as a happy augury for the harmonious relations between the two Sovereigns, and as offering a propitious example to the other Sovereign members of the North German Confederation.

The King of Prussia, attended only by an aide-de-camp, went to Gross-Beeren to meet His Majesty, and the Crown Prince and all the Royal Princes and great officers of State received the Saxon monarch at the Berlin railway station. The Queen was at the Royal Palace to await His Majesty's arrival.

An article in the semi-official paper announced on the day previous to his arrival that the object of the

King's visit was to obliterate the past, and to give evidence that Saxony would henceforth maintain towards Prussia the fidelity and the devotedness of a faithful ally.

On the 1st of January, 1867, a Jubilee Festival in commemoration of the sixty years of military service of the King was celebrated at Potsdam, which was the headquarters of the regiment in which His Majesty, sixty years earlier, had commenced his military career, when barely ten years of age.

The ceremony commenced with divine service, after which the colours of five regiments, with the badges commemorative of the recent losses sustained by them during the war, were consecrated by Herr Thielen, the Chaplain-General to the Army.

The King subsequently held a military levée at the palace, at which a silver column was presented to His Majesty, in the name of the officers of the Prussian army, by the Crown Prince, with an address, to which the King made a gracious reply.

A gold laurel crown was then presented to His Majesty, by a deputation headed by Prince W. Radziwill and General Count Voss, in the name of a number of retired officers and soldiers.

Subsequently the King gave a military banquet, to which 400 officers were invited, and at which His Majesty gave a toast in honour of his army and people, to which Field-Marshal Wrangel replied in loyal terms.

These ceremonies produce a happy effect. They

form a link of union between the Sovereign and his army, and they leave an imperishable impression on the minds of all present.

The Count of Flanders arrived at Berlin on the 6th of February, for the purpose of thanking the King of Prussia for his sanction to his marriage with the Princess of Hohenzollern. He was very kindly received by their Majesties, to whom this event gave great satisfaction. The marriage was to take place in May at Berlin, when the King of the Belgians was expected to visit their Prussian Majesties.

The winter season of 1866-67, the usual gay time at Berlin, was less animated this year than on previous occasions. The Court festivities took place as usual, and perhaps were more brilliant than previously, but many families were in mourning from losses during the late war, which cast a gloom over society, and to this was added the doubts and fears which were entertained in regard to the maintenance of peace.

The question of Luxembourg, which had arisen in the early part of 1867, and to which I have alluded in a previous chapter, gave cause for these fears, and Europe was on the brink of war. Great merit is due to the King and to Count Bismarck, as also to the Emperor Napoleon, for the judgment and moderation they displayed in the treatment of this delicate question, which was finally and happily solved by the Conference of London. I do not think that the general public were at all aware at the time of the grave danger which had menaced the peace of Europe.

The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg was neutralised, under the guarantee of the European Powers, and was placed with Limburg under the Sovereignty of the King of the Netherlands, as it had existed since 1815. The Prussian garrison was withdrawn. At this time there was some uneasiness in Holland in regard to the policy and intentions of Count Bismarck. This uneasiness on the part of Holland was quite unfounded, and probably originated from certain expressions of Count Bismarck in regard to the Anti-Prussian tone of the Dutch and Belgian Press, which had been misinterpreted and misunderstood. After complaining of the tone of the Dutch Press, it appears that Count Bismarck referred likewise to the animosity of the Belgian Press, adding that "if Belgium continued in this course, *elle pourrait la payer cher.*"

Count Bismarck subsequently, in referring to Limburg, stated that that province was freed from all community with Germans by the dissolution of the Germanic Confederation, and that all fears, if any had existed, might be allayed.

Rumours had been disseminated by the European Press of demands made by Prussia to Holland for a rectification of frontier. These rumours gained strength by the reported Secret Session of the Second Dutch Chamber on the discussion of the Budget for Foreign Affairs. The Dutch Minister denied that any such demands had been made by Prussia, and stated that they were unfounded; still, he accompanied this statement with a recommendation that the country should be prepared

for the moment of danger, and that if Holland was determined to maintain its independence, it must not shrink from the sacrifices which that resolution would entail.

It is to be regretted that discord is often produced—unintentionally perhaps—between Governments by ill-judged and not authenticated information supplied by the Press. Sensational articles and telegrams, resting on a slender basis, tend to inflame the public mind; and thus when delicate questions are under treatment between Governments, their relations may be exacerbated by such publications. There is a distinct tendency in the modern Press to afford warrant for the lines of Pope:—

Flying rumours gathered as they rolled ;
Scarce any tale was sooner heard than told,
And all who told it added something new,
And all who heard it made enlargements too.
In every ear it spread, on every tongue it grew.

On the 2nd of March I wrote as follows to Lord Stanley on German affairs:—

The speech of the King of Prussia on the opening of the first North German Parliament has elicited universal approval among all political parties in the country. The Berlin Press of all shades of political opinion concur in the policy—present and future—which is foreshadowed in the Royal Speech, and responds to the patriotic aspirations which it inspires.

As regards the position of Prussia and Northern Germany towards Foreign States, great stress is laid on the pacific and non-aggressive policy of Germany, while at the same time the eventual unity of Germany under one head is unmistakably

referred to as the ultimate and indispensable object of the German nation.

Count Bismarck does not wish at this moment to embarrass the consolidation of the Northern Confederation by any precipitate adjunction of Southern Germany. His intention appears to be to prepare the way for a perfect unity of all Germany under Prussian supremacy by a reconstruction of the Zollverein, and by unitary measures in all matters of commerce and internal legislation. By these means the unity of Germany will be proceeded with, and in such a manner that the political unity must necessarily ensue. The closer the material interests of the North and South are bound together, the stronger will be their political alliance. Until the foundations of material unity are firmly laid, the entrance of the Southern States into the Northern Confederation would only tend to division and confusion.

Such was the position and policy of Prussia on the opening of the first North German Parliament. By its moderation, and the sound judgment it displayed, it was enabled to lay the foundations of that Imperial unity which was subsequently to follow, and which was the aim and aspiration of the German nation.

The birthday of the King of Prussia, on the 22nd of March, was celebrated by an official full-dress banquet, given by Count Bismarck to the Diplomatic Body and the commissioners of the North German Confederation. The health of His Majesty was proposed by the French Ambassador, which was responded to by Count Bismarck, who gave the health of the Sovereigns and rulers in amity and alliance with Prussia.

On these occasions it was the custom of the Court for the King to receive the felicitations of the

ambassadors together. There were then only two ambassadors, the English and French. On my arrival at the palace I found that Count Benedetti had had his audience, and I was consequently received alone.

The King informed me that Count Benedetti had requested to be received a quarter of an hour earlier than the hour fixed for our reception, as he had a letter to present from the Emperor. His Majesty said that he had expected some political object, but nothing of the kind took place. He only delivered a letter from the Emperor, expressing the hope and wish of seeing His Majesty at Paris for the opening of the Exhibition.

The King referred to the recent publication (on March 19th) of the treaties between Prussia, Bavaria, Würtemberg, and Baden, and observed that these treaties had already been concluded at the moment when France had claimed Mayence. In effect, I may remark, this had been accomplished before the signature of the Treaty of Prague in August, 1866.

The King added that the policy of Prussia and Germany was purely of a defensive character, as he had stated in his speech on opening the North German Parliament. Germany, he said, was no aggressive Power, besides which in these days no Power could make war for purposes of conquest or aggression.

I replied that I was happy to inform His Majesty I had that morning received a despatch on the subject of Count Bernstorff's communication, in which Lord Stanley had expressed his satisfaction, in the

interest of European peace, that the union of Germany for defensive purposes had been happily effected.

I observed to His Majesty that the policy of England was peace. The constitution of Germany on a solid and united basis would offer a fresh guarantee for its maintenance, supported by the assurances which His Majesty had just given of the purely defensive character of the treaties referred to.

The King expressed great sympathy with the Princess of Wales in her illness, and said he had been much gratified to receive that morning a more comforting report of Her Royal Highness.

The King of the Belgians, accompanied by the Count of Flanders, arrived at Berlin on the 24th of April, 1867, for the marriage of the Count of Flanders with Princess Mary of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen.

The marriage was solemnised at St. Hedwigs, the Roman Catholic church at Berlin, with great pomp, in the presence of their Prussian Majesties, the Royal Family, the Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, and other Princes members of the House of Hohenzollern.

After the ceremony the bridal party repaired to the palace, where a banquet of eighty covers was served. The Foreign Ambassadors were not invited to the banquet, the invitations being confined to the Envoys and Ministers of the Sovereigns present at the marriage. In the evening a concert was given by the Crown Prince and Princess in honour of the occasion, to which Lady Augustus and I had the honour of being invited.

On the following day a Court was held at the palace by the King of the Belgians and the Count and Countess of Flanders, at which the Diplomatic Corps were presented to His Majesty and the royal bride, after which a gala concert was given by their Majesties, which closed the marriage festivities.

I was honoured with a private audience of the King of the Belgians. After expressing his grateful sense of the many proofs of kind interest which our gracious Queen had evinced towards him and his family, the King referred to the all-engrossing question of Luxembourg.

He expressed his sincere hope that England would effect an understanding between France and Prussia, and thus save Europe from the miseries of war. His Majesty stated that France looked to England for this good service. He was fully convinced (having just come from Paris) that there was a great desire there for the maintenance of peace, and he could bear testimony that the Emperor Napoleon was most reasonable and disposed for peace. He said that he found the atmosphere of the Court here very pacific, both on the part of the King and the influential military personages with whom he had conversed; but he added that he could not perceive there was any decided view as to the mode of giving effect to this pacific disposition.

The King then referred to the proposal of Baron Beust for giving Luxembourg to Belgium in exchange for a cession of Belgian territory to France. He expressed, in the strongest terms, his aversion to any

such arrangement, observing that he would never consent to any such "traffic" of his "compatriots" (this was the term used by His Majesty).

He said that the Emperor had expressly told him he required no cession of territory from Belgium; and in a conversation with Prince Napoleon, His Imperial Highness had strongly denounced any such plan, saying to His Majesty "*Pas de tripotage*," alluding also (as His Majesty believed) to the proposed sale of Luxembourg by the King of Holland.

The King said that he had studiously refrained from any interference in the Luxembourg question, and that nothing would induce him to entertain any proposal for a cession of Belgian territory.

The King appeared to entertain some idea that Prussia might require for the cession of the fortress some guarantee or assurance from France that no further claims would be put forward by the latter, and that she would not interfere in the internal consolidation of Germany, thus leaving Prussia at liberty to bring about a complete fusion of Northern and Southern Germany.

I replied to His Majesty that I thought there would be great difficulty in framing any such guarantee, for it was not easy to ask a Government to give a guarantee for its honesty and good conduct, and a guarantee of the nature suggested would assuredly be viewed in this light.

His Majesty dwelt on the miseries and dangers to Europe of war, and once again observed that on

England rested the honour and the Christian duty of averting it.

I observed to His Majesty that the question in itself was easy of solution. The chief difficulty was in finding the means of inducing Prussia to withdraw her garrison. There was a further difficulty—namely, a distrust of France on the part of Prussia. His Majesty, having just come from Paris, might render service by bearing testimony to the pacific disposition of the Emperor.

Although His Majesty, with great prudence and judgment, abstained from any direct interference in the Luxembourg question during his stay at Berlin, I have reason to think that his visit was *at the time* of great utility, not only in regard to the question of peace or war, but likewise in regard to the establishment of cordial relations for the future between Prussia and Belgium.

Although I have cursorily referred to the Luxembourg question in a preceding chapter, I think the details which I subjoin may not be without interest to my readers.

I had the honour of meeting the King of Prussia at a party given by the Crown Princess. In the course of the evening His Majesty was pleased to address me, and I profited of the opportunity to refer to the gravity which the Luxembourg question was assuming, expressing a hope that means might be found of effecting a satisfactory arrangement, and of thus averting war.

The King replied that he was certainly disposed for

peace, and most desirous that it should be maintained. "But why," inquired His Majesty, "am I always appealed to in the cause of peace? I have no wish for war. The present case of Luxembourg has not been of my seeking. It is France that has raised the question."

I replied that I was so sensible of His Majesty's wish for peace that I ventured to speak to His Majesty in furtherance of it, and to inquire whether some means might not be found of giving practical effect to the object so ardently desired by His Majesty.

The present state of things, I said, was most critical. The Luxembourg question had suddenly become "*une question brûlante*," and the present "status" could no longer exist without danger to the peace of Europe. I had every reason to believe that the Emperor Napoleon and his Government were anxious for a pacific solution of this question, and to avoid war. This disposition would probably be confirmed by the King of the Belgians, who had, only a few days ago, seen the Emperor. As all parties, therefore, were anxious for peace, surely the question was capable of a pacific arrangement. It appeared to me that an understanding could be found on the basis of the neutralisation of the Grand Duchy and of the fortress.

His Majesty replied that he was quite ready to accept that basis, provided that, as regarded the fortress, proposals should be made to him of a nature which he could accept, and provided that the public opinion of Germany would permit him to accept them.

I observed to His Majesty that the question of Luxembourg bore an European character. I ventured to observe also that when the European Powers had agreed on the future position of the Grand Duchy, His Majesty could take the initiative—without any action on the part of Europe—in settling the question of the fortress, by declaring that there was no longer a motive for maintaining there a Prussian garrison. The withdrawal, therefore, of the Prussian garrison would be the spontaneous act of His Majesty, taken in virtue of the new position made for the Grand Duchy.

His Majesty replied that France had raised this question in an unjustifiable manner, and put forward a pretension to which he could not agree. The voice of Germany must be consulted, and he would be prepared to act in accordance with it.

I stated to His Majesty that if this condition should be attached to any proposal for a pacific arrangement, I was afraid it would annul all chances of a successful result. I ventured to submit to His Majesty the circumstances of the position.

I stated that the Grand Duchy, as a member of the late Germanic Confederation, was originally of European creation. The Germanic Confederation had now been swept away, and the Grand Duchy had been stranded, as it were, on the beach. It was neither included in the Northern Confederacy, nor had it any link with the Southern States. It was a small strip of country situated between two powerful States, which,

in consequence of the events of the past year, had been abandoned to itself. It was, therefore, the duty of the European Powers to fix the future position of the Grand Duchy, and I hoped that this could be so accomplished by amicable negotiations as to be satisfactory to all parties.

On my reference to the dissolution of the Germanic Confederation, His Majesty said that this result had been obtained by the victory of his arms; but if he had been vanquished, the case would have been very different. I replied that I had merely referred to that event inasmuch as it related to the present position of the Grand Duchy. The question was to find a solution for a state of things becoming every day more critical. Not a moment should be lost by the Powers of Europe in applying a remedy; or otherwise events, in their rapid succession, might intervene to mar the pacific intentions of all parties.

I inquired whether His Majesty would authorise me to inform Her Majesty's Government that he would accept an European Conference on the basis of the neutralisation of the Grand Duchy and of the fortress.

His Majesty replied that he would accept a Conference, but that the withdrawal of the Prussian garrison from the fortress must depend on the conditions offered to him, and provided that the public opinion of Germany should sanction it.

His Majesty observed that he had already expressed these intentions, and that even some weeks previously he had made an appeal to the European Powers on

the subject of the treaties relating to Luxembourg, but that his Government had not yet received any replies.

The conversation then ended, and His Majesty cordially shook hands with me, and expressed his anxious desire for peace, and that means should be found for a satisfactory settlement of the question.

At an interview I had with Count Bismarck, subsequent to my conversation with the King, I repeated the arguments I had used to His Majesty in behalf of a satisfactory arrangement of this question. I observed that it was urgent to effect this in order to tranquillise the public mind, which was much excited by the fear of war. The position of the Grand Duchy was not a comfortable one, situated between two powerful States. The fortress, which had been a Federal fortress, had now ceased to retain that character. It was evident that the future position of the Grand Duchy should be definitely fixed, and for this purpose the counsels and assent of the European Powers were required. Would, therefore, Prussia accept an European Conference for this purpose, on the basis of the neutralisation of the Grand Duchy and of the fortress? or could His Excellency point out any other course which would equally meet the aim in view?

His Excellency expressed very sincerely his wish for peace, and said that Prussia was disposed to accept any honourable terms of arrangement. The first thing was to find a motive for an European Conference, and he thought, therefore, that Holland should apply to the European Powers in regard to the position of the

Grand Duchy, and, on her invitation, a Conference should be proposed.

Prussia, he said, was not indisposed to a Conference, and would, if proposed, accept it, but he could not accept beforehand any pre-concerted basis. It was impossible for Prussia to make any concessions previous to a Conference which might be viewed or interpreted as concessions to France; but in the Conference Prussia could concede to Europe and to Holland, for the preservation of peace, what she could not concede before entering the Conference. All he could say, therefore, was that, if a Conference should be proposed, Prussia would accept it, but without any basis and without undertaking any engagements beforehand.

The foregoing was the official answer of Count Bismarck; but I was given to understand that in the Conference Prussia would be disposed to accept the neutralisation of the Grand Duchy, and to withdraw the Prussian garrison from the fortress, if the fortress should be dismantled or placed under an European guarantee. But it was added at the same time that Prussia could enter into no arrangement which was not in concurrence with, and supported by, the public opinion and national feeling of Germany.

The Conference met in London. There were only four sittings, and all was amicably arranged, as I have previously mentioned. The dismantling of the fortress (which Count Bismarck styled "the ornamental article") raised no difficulties.

The success of the Conference, which saved the

peace of Europe when France and Prussia were on the brink of war, was of great importance. It reassured the present, and it seemed a happy omen for the future. The fact that, for the time at least, war had been averted by a Conference suggests that this salutary precedent may on future occasions be appealed to in a kindred emergency.

The question of a general disarmament has been mooted from time to time, but has met with no successful issue, however well disposed might be the several Governments to diminish the enormous annual burthen of their armies. In my opinion the question of armaments can only be regulated by the several Parliaments, who are the keepers of their nation's purse. It would be impossible to limit numerically the standing army of any country, and to do so would encroach on the rights of the Sovereign; but a criterion might be given by the amount of the military budget voted annually, and each country might take the engagement not to exceed the normal budget fixed by each Government, unless for special purposes. By some such arrangement the nation would likewise be interested in the maintenance of peace, and would watch over the military expenditure.

I am afraid, however, from the signs of the times, that the Great Powers of Europe have not yet reached such a happy state of concord and peaceful brotherhood as to lead one to hope for a general disarmament. The present outlook points rather to an increase than to a decrease of the standing armies of the great military Powers.

A sad and tragic event darkened the year 1867, an event which had a serious effect on the mind of the Emperor Napoleon, and gravely compromised his popularity and prestige in France. I allude to the death of the Emperor Maximilian of Mexico, who was shot at Queretaro on the 19th of June.

In 1862 the Emperor Napoleon had reached the summit of his remarkable career. He had engaged in two successful wars. He had liberated Italy. He had added two rich provinces (Savoy and Nice) to France. He had embellished Paris, and made it the most brilliant capital of Europe, and he had established amicable relations with all the European Powers. But his active mind and his restless ambition was lured into embarking on further adventures, stimulated, as was generally reported, by the Ultramontane party in Mexico, at the head of which was a certain Count Almonte, who first suggested the idea of creating a monarchy in Mexico.

At that time the Civil War was raging in America between the Northern and Southern States. The sympathies of the Emperor Napoleon were supposed to be with the latter, and he had confidence in their final success. The Cabinet of Washington was unable during the Civil War to offer any armed resistance to the overthrow of the Republican Government of Mexico, and to the substitution for it of a monarchy. The primary object of England, France, and Spain had been to compel Mexico to satisfy her creditors in those countries, and common action for this purpose was being negotiated.

But when the British Government learnt the real object of the Emperor Napoleon, they declined to participate in any expedition for the establishment of a monarchy in Mexico, and withdrew their fleet. Spain followed the course taken by England, and the Emperor was left alone to carry out his Quixotic policy.

I cannot fail here to mention the services rendered by Sir C. Wyke, through whose judicious instrumentality the British Government was saved from becoming a participator in a course so utterly opposed to British feelings and policy.

The crown of Mexico was offered to and accepted by the Archduke Maximilian of Austria, and the Emperor supported him with an army of 25,000 men, under the command of Marshal Bazaine. The Republic was overthrown, the Archduke Maximilian was installed as Emperor, and Juarez, the former President, retired to the American frontier.

But in 1865, on the termination of the Civil War in America, the Washington Cabinet refused to recognise the Emperor Maximilian as Sovereign of Mexico, and signified to the Emperor Napoleon that his troops must be withdrawn—to which demand he was obliged to accede. The mistake made by the Emperor Maximilian was not to have retired with the French troops, without whose support his fall was certain. But the noble and chivalrous Maximilian refused to abandon his devoted friends and followers.

On the departure of the French troops in March, 1867, the supporters of Juarez occupied the country.

On the 15th of May the Emperor Maximilian was made prisoner at Queretaro. Every attempt was made by the Courts of Europe to save him, but in vain. By the sentence of a court-martial he was shot on the 19th of June, 1867.

The fate of Maximilian was a severe blow to the Emperor Napoleon, and he felt the melancholy catastrophe deeply ; he must have seen that he had been the means of inducing the unfortunate Archduke to accept a position of such perilous risk, and he was greatly moved that under the circumstances in which he was placed he had been unable to fulfil his engagement to continue to give him armed support. He had intended his services to the Archduke to be an act of kindness, and in some degree as a compensation to Austria for the loss, through his means, of her Italian possessions ; but his hopes, his ambitions, his friendly feelings had been miserably foiled, and in their failure he had further to deplore the tragic incident which had filled Europe with commiseration.

This event, coupled with the severe financial losses which had been incurred, greatly weakened the confidence with which the Emperor Napoleon had been regarded in France, and was humiliating to the nation.

The opening of the International Exhibition at Paris in May, 1867, greatly contributed to occupy the thoughts of the French nation, and to draw off their attention from political events.

There was a general concourse of Sovereigns, Princes,

and celebrities of all kinds to Paris from all parts of the world.

The Crown Prince and Princess of Prussia left Potsdam for Paris on the 23rd of May. The Prince was President of the Prussian Department of the International Exhibition, and the motive for his visit was ostensibly to fulfil the duties of his office.

At a ball at Count Bismarck's the Portuguese Minister, conversing with the King, said: "*Le Roi va à Paris pour l'Exposition.*" The King, taken rather aback by what he thought a pointed question, replied—"*Oui, je compte y aller.*" The Minister explained that he had referred to his own Sovereign. Unintentionally he had thus learnt that the King of Prussia intended to go to Paris.

The Emperor of Russia, accompanied by the Csesarevitch and the Grand Duke Vladimir, and attended by Prince Gortschakoff, arrived at Potsdam on May 31st and left on the same day for Paris, on the invitation of the Emperor Napoleon, to visit the Exhibition. It had been intended that the King of Prussia should accompany his nephew; but it appeared that the arrival of the two Sovereigns at the same moment was not congenial to the Emperor Napoleon, whether on political grounds or for mere reasons of etiquette was not known. It was conveyed to the Prussian Ambassador at Paris that it would be more agreeable to receive the two Sovereigns separately. The King of Prussia had wished to have the companionship of his Imperial nephew during his stay at Paris. Later it was so arranged,

and the King of Prussia, attended by Count Bismarck, General Moltke, and a numerous suite, left Berlin for Paris on June 4th. Count Bismarck was accompanied by a large staff of secretaries.

The Emperor of Russia was lodged with the Grand Dukes; Prince Gortschakoff and all his suite at the Élysée; the King of Prussia and his suite in the Pavillon Marsan, forming part of the Tuileries.

The King of Prussia was much gratified by the cordial reception given to the Crown Prince and Princess by their Imperial Majesties. Before his departure from Berlin a State dinner was given by the King on the 24th of May, in honour of the birthday of Her Majesty the Queen, to which I was invited, with all the members of Her Majesty's Embassy. During the dinner the King rose, and gave the health of our gracious Sovereign. His Majesty told me that he had already transmitted by telegraph to the Queen his felicitations on this happy occasion, but he wished to repeat them again to me, and charged me to convey to Her Majesty his fervent wishes for her continued health and happiness. Prince Oscar of Sweden was present at the banquet, as were also the Princes of the Prussian Royal Family.

The King appeared in the best health and spirits, and mentioned to me that he had just received a telegram from the Queen, felicitating His Majesty on the happy success of the London Conference on the Luxembourg question and on the maintenance of peace.

The brilliancy of the Paris Exhibition was greatly enhanced by the presence of the Sovereigns and Princes

of Europe and Asia who responded to the invitation of the Emperor Napoleon. Their visits were personally gratifying to His Majesty, they were flattering to the French nation, and they were regarded by Europe as a testimony to the consolidation of peace.

In former times of absolute government the meeting of Emperors and Kings was regarded as of greater political importance than in the present day, and were viewed by the friends of civil and religious liberty with some degree of suspicious fear. But since the era of constitutional government has set in, these traditional feelings have wholly disappeared, for the policy of States can alone rest on, and be guided by, public opinion. The visit of Sovereigns, as also of all classes, to the imposing exhibitions of industry, art, and science must impress their minds with a love for peace—so indispensably necessary to promote the industrious labour of man, to increase the wealth of nations, and thereby to further the progress and civilisation of the world. The visit to Paris of the Sovereigns of the great military Powers might have imbued them with the conviction that the vast armaments of Europe were acting as a dead weight on the promotion of industry, and that by reducing their armaments to the lowest point commensurate with safety, they would further the national interests, and promote the wealth and happiness of their subjects far more than seeking military achievements and territorial extensions.

During the presence at Paris of the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia a grand military review

was held at Longchamps of 60,000 men—the largest ever held at Paris, which was attended by the Emperor and the King. On returning from the review, the carriage in which were seated the Emperor Napoleon and the Emperor of Russia with his two sons was fired at near the Cascade in the Bois de Boulogne. The first shot passed through the nostrils of the horse of the equerry riding at the side of the carriage. A second shot was fired, when the pistol burst, injuring the hand of the assailant. He was a Pole, named Bereszowski. He said that the shots were intended for the Emperor of Russia. He was arrested and taken to the police. This sinister event caused great emotion, and cast a gloom over the festivities in honour of their Majesties. It did not, however, cause the ball at the Russian Embassy on the same evening to be postponed. It took place by the Emperor's command, and he was present at it, with the Emperor Napoleon and the King of Prussia. On various occasions in public the cry of "Vive la Pologne!" was uttered, loud enough for the Emperor to hear, and caused him much annoyance. But it was not surprising, as at that time there were many Poles who had been employed in the Exhibition works, and it was quite impossible to silence them.

A "Te Deum" was celebrated at the Russian chapel, to return thanks for the Czar's merciful escape, which was attended by the Emperor, the Czar, and the King of Prussia.

On the 8th of June, 1867, the Emperor of Austria

was crowned King of Hungary at Buda-Pesth, amid the enthusiastic applause of the nation.

Thus was closed the conflict which had lasted since 1848 between the Imperial Crown and the Hungarian nation. A universal amnesty was proclaimed, with no exceptions to the return of the exiles; and loyalty, peace, and concord were restored between the Crown and the nation.

CHAPTER VIII.

Visit of King of Prussia to Paris—Observations on It—Count Bismarck's Opinions on Cretan Insurrection and Eastern Question—Relations between Russia and Prussia—Bismarck's Wish for an Alliance with Austria—The Emperor of Russia at Berlin—Panslavist Meeting at Moscow—Meeting of Emperor Napoleon and Emperor Franz Josef at Salzburg—Return Visit of Emperor of Austria to Paris—Comments on the general Fear of War—Reception of the Sultan by King at Coblenz—The Roman Question—French Troops, under General Failly, sent to Civita Vecchia against Garibaldi, who was Defeated and taken Prisoner—Conversation with King and Count Bismarck on Proposed Conference—Harmony of Views between England and Prussia—Garibaldi Reappears—Battle of Mentana—Garibaldians Defeated and Dispersed—Garibaldi Arrested—Lord Stanley—His Character—Speech of Rouher—A Death-blow to Conference—The Abyssinian Expedition—Cause of It—The Cretan Insurrection—Peaceful Termination of 1867.

THE visit of the King of Prussia to Paris passed off harmoniously, and the two Sovereigns took leave of each other with renewed assurances of friendship and good-will. It is impossible to know what took place in their intimate relations, but I am inclined to believe that both Sovereigns studiously avoided political topics. The great tact and the chivalrous character of the King would debar him, as the guest of his Imperial host, from entering on any political question of a delicate or thorny nature.

With regard to Count Bismarck the case was different; and during a series of previous years the Emperor had conversed intimately with him on

European questions. If report is true, His Majesty profited by the opportunity to let out his "bile," and to express the disappointment he had felt by the failure of his hopes. It is possible that Count Bismarck would have been glad to meet the Emperor's wishes had he been enabled to do so in conformity with the public opinion and interests of Germany. But in this matter Count Bismarck was not supreme, and he was powerless without the consent of his Sovereign, who had openly declared that he would not cede an inch of German territory to France.

On his return from Paris, Count Bismarck, in conversation with me, expressed himself as very much satisfied with the reception of the King and Crown Prince, which had surpassed his expectations. Nothing, he said, could exceed the courtesy and attention which were shown to the King by the Emperor and Empress and the Imperial Court. The King had also been received with much respect and good-will by the public, and the absence of any demonstration or marks of ill-feeling towards Prussia had produced a satisfactory effect on the Emperor, whose attitude became more cordial and less embarrassed when assured that the royal visit was acceptable to the French nation, and that no overt expression of animosity to Prussia had been given vent to by the Parisian public. Count Bismarck said that as regarded himself he had not been—as he had anticipated—the object of marked disfavour, but had been treated with "benevolent curiosity."

He had had a long and frank explanation with the Emperor, and he said that unless no dependence could be placed on French assurances, and unless French statesmen were the most perfect comedians, no fears were to be entertained in regard to the maintenance of peace.

As Count Bismarck had seen Prince Gortschakoff at Paris and Berlin, I inquired whether any exchange of opinions had taken place in regard to Eastern affairs.

He replied that if England would assist in obtaining the cession of Crete to Greece, all present difficulties in the East would be at once arranged.

I observed to him that this was not a question which we could solve in the manner he proposed. Crete was a possession of the Sultan, and in principle we could not require of an independent Sovereign the cession of a territory he was not disposed to give up. Count Bismarck replied that the civil war in Crete could not continue without danger to other portions of the Ottoman Empire, and that if the Sultan did not succeed shortly in extinguishing the fire burning in Crete, it would extend, and assume much larger proportions.

Some time previously Count Bismarck, in referring to the Cretan question, had observed that he could not recognise it as designating "the Eastern question," which was a much larger question. He said that while the King felt much sympathy for the Christian population, and was desirous that their condition under the Turkish rule should be improved, Prussia had no

direct or vital interest in the East, and that she would be prepared to act in concert with the other European Powers for a settlement of the differences then existing, with a view to the general welfare and peace.

Count Bismarck, in conversing with me in the early part of 1867, said he had always considered that the Eastern question was treated with too much "passion"; that it pressed like a nightmare on European diplomacy; and that it always appeared as a black cloud looming in the horizon, and likely to bring a deluge on the earth. It was, he said, purely a question of rivalry and personality at Constantinople, and was continually held in terror over Europe as threatening to bring in its train a general conflagration. He could not, however, consider it in this light. As regarded the European Powers, none were so directly interested in this question as that their vital interests depended on its solution.

Austria, he observed, which was the State most concerned, on account of the affinity of the Eastern Christian races with those of her own Empire (*viz.*, the Serbs, Roumans, and Slovaks), appeared to treat it lightly, if not with indifference.

Russia, continued Count Bismarck, could not desire to extend her territory, for it would tend to her weakness, and render her more open to attack. She had already a sufficiently large population of uncivilised races—a superabundant extent of wild steppes. The possession of Constantinople itself would only be for her the creation of another Sebastopol at the extreme point

of her frontier, which would render her more vulnerable. France could not look to acquire Eastern possessions, nor could this question be of any more importance to her than the mere vanity of prestige.

To my observation that France had always claimed to be considered a protectress of the Latin Church, Count Bismarck replied that when France gave up the Protectorate of the Papacy at Rome, it could not be supposed that she could attach much value to that of the Latin Church in the East.

England, he observed, might regard with anxiety and interest the highroad through Egypt to her Indian possessions; but happen what might, the security of this communication would not be endangered.

Prussia, Count Bismarck said, had no direct political interest at stake as regarded the Eastern question. Her interests in Turkey were purely of a material and commercial nature. Whatever changes might occur in the East, the commercial interests of all nations would be equally safeguarded, since the wants and movement of trade were wholly irrespective of political changes.

Count Bismarck was, therefore, of opinion that the Eastern question was capable of a solution without bringing about, as was generally feared, an European convulsion; and he seemed to think that a general understanding might be come to between the Powers to save Europe from the fatal consequences which were apprehended from a dissolution of the Ottoman Empire.

As regarded Russia, Count Bismarck did not

attribute to her the aggressive designs so generally entertained. As a question of self-pride and of military honour, she might desire to regain that portion of her territory she had lost in 1856.

I here observed that the Danube was a German river, and it was generally held to be of great importance that the mouths of this great artery of commerce should be free from Russian control. Count Bismarck replied that this was an illusionary idea. The Danube, he said, was scarcely navigable, and it would require an expenditure of millions to make it so. He could not consider that it was an object of commercial importance to Germany.

I have thought it right to give the opinions expressed to me by Count Bismarck on the Eastern question, as being those of an eminent and impartial statesman, whose practical views, whose great experience and commanding position entitle them to the wise and the unbiassed consideration of the present and future Governments of Europe.

On the question of the retrocession of a portion of Sleswig to Denmark, in conformity with the Treaty of Prague, and regarding the execution of which frequent reclamations had been officially addressed by France to the Prussian Government, I believe that Count Bismarck would not have been indisposed to have given up Alsen. The King, however, was opposed to its retrocession, on the grounds that it had been won at the cost of Prussian blood; to which Count Bismarck, it is said, observed to His Majesty that

on those grounds Prussia should have kept "Montmartre."

The visit to Paris was productive of some good, though even of a temporary nature. It improved the personal relations of the two Sovereigns, and it softened existing asperities, but the future remained veiled.

The relations between Russia and Prussia were cordial, but Count Bismarck was not disposed to take any steps with either France or Russia on Eastern affairs, considering that an Austrian alliance was of more consequence. At that time the Cretan insurrection was in full vigour, and the object of Russia was to obtain, through an European consent, the cession of Crete by Turkey to Greece.

I was then of opinion that although, at great sacrifice of blood and treasure, the Turks had been victorious, it was desirable to strengthen the trunk and to give vitality to Turkey by cutting off its rotten branches. The insurrection had been kept alive by intrigues and volunteers from Greece, and the cession was opposed on the grounds that were Turkey to cede the island it would be interpreted as an act of weakness, and would serve as a stimulus to other Christian provinces to throw off the Turkish yoke and to join Greece.

The insurrection was finally put down. The Greek volunteers returned to Greece, and peace and tranquillity were restored for the moment; but, like another volcano, it is certain to burst out afresh on the first favourable opportunity.

The Emperor of Russia, on his return journey to Russia, in June, 1867, passed some days at Berlin with the King. At a review given him on the day of the parade the Emperor was invited to give the "parole" for the day. He gave "Hanover." This was somewhat cynical, as the Emperor had been strongly opposed to the subversion of the Hanoverian monarchy.

There was an assembly of Panslavists held at Moscow this year, and largely attended by Germans. But when they came together they found that they could only communicate with each other through the medium of the German language! This Panslavist movement is as dangerous to Russia as it is supposed by many to be useful to her. It bears within itself the germs of future revolution.

The Emperor of Austria had intended to visit the Exhibition at Paris at the invitation of the Emperor Napoleon, but his purpose was frustrated by the tragic death of the Emperor Maximilian of Mexico. Count Beust, who was then Minister of Foreign Affairs and of the Imperial House, speaks in his Memoirs as follows* :—

I was, for my part, very anxious that under such circumstances the Emperor's dignity should be preserved, and I declared it to be essential that, if His Majesty went to Paris, it should be in return to a visit paid to him. In this sense I wrote to the Ambassador in Paris, and Prince Metternich prevailed on the Emperor Napoleon to proceed to Salzburg.

The meeting took place on the 18th of August, 1867.

* See "Memoirs of Count Beust," Vol. II., page 33.

The Emperor was accompanied by the Empress Eugénie, who, with her usual grace and captivating manner, added in no small degree to the success of the meeting, but he was not attended by any of his Ministers, probably with a view to show that no political object was connected with the interview. But, nevertheless, the meeting of the two Sovereigns created some suspicion, not unmixed with alarm, at Berlin.

The return visit of the Emperor Franz Josef to the Emperor and Empress at Paris took place in October following, but the Empress Elizabeth was unable to accompany the Emperor, being on the eve of her confinement.

The King of Prussia was then residing at Baden-Baden, and had a short interview with the Emperor of Austria at Oos, their first meeting since the late war.

Fresh rumours of French armaments reached Berlin, and they fed the flame which had produced, and was again producing, distrust of France, and gave consistency to a general fear of war. I frequently asked myself why war—that scourge of nations—should take place between France and Germany. No party could gain by it, except the democratic and Socialist party, and no greater assistance could be given them than by an European war. The monarchical principle had received a rude blow in Mexico. The King of Prussia morally weakened it by dethroning the German Princes, and an European war would only give strength to the democratic and revolutionary party throughout Europe. On the late occasion the subversionary element

had come from above, and not from below. Why should not France and Germany be content to live in peace and harmony? Neither can hope to obtain aggrandisement at the expense of the other. It is a mere question of supremacy; and as the war of 1866 took place for the supremacy in Germany, the future war will be for the supremacy in Europe. But this principle, if acted upon, will perpetuate wars; for the vanquished will abide the moment to regain from the victor what has been lost.

The King of Prussia had charged Aristarchi Bey, the Turkish Minister at Berlin, to convey his regrets to the Sultan that his absence would prevent him from receiving His Majesty at Berlin. But, being at Ems on the passage of the Sultan through Coblenz, the King repaired there, and received with every mark of distinction His Majesty at the station.

The two Sovereigns drove to the Palace, where the Sultan was received by the Queen and Princess Charles of Prussia, Princess Frederick of Hesse (her daughter), and the members of her Court.

After a military parade of the troops forming the garrison of Coblenz, a State banquet was given by the King in honour of the Sultan, to which one hundred and fifty persons were invited. After the banquet their Prussian Majesties, accompanied by the Sultan and the members of his suite, proceeded by steamer to Stolzenfels. On their return a grand illumination, with fireworks, took place on both sides of the Rhine. The festive scene, although somewhat disturbed by the

weather, was rendered more imposing by a military display from the fortress of Ehrenbreitstein. The Sultan wore the Prussian decoration of the Black Eagle, and was the object of marked attention by their Prussian Majesties.

On the following morning the Sultan took leave of their Majesties, and continued his route to Vienna.

The King conferred the Order of the Black Eagle on Fuad Pacha, and Prussian decorations were likewise bestowed on all the members of the Sultan's suite in accordance with their rank.

There sprang up now a Roman question. The state of affairs in Italy was very unsatisfactory. It arose from the circumstance of the Italian nation claiming Rome for their capital, and the withdrawal of the French garrison for the protection of the Pope.

The French garrison had been withdrawn from Rome in the latter part of 1866, and the relations of France and Italy were at that time on a satisfactory footing till the latter part of 1867, when the affairs of Italy, and even the position of the Sovereign Pontiff, awakened a deep feeling in France, which the Emperor Napoleon felt himself unable to resist. Notwithstanding his threats and warnings to the Italian Government, Garibaldi and his volunteers crossed the frontiers of the Papal States, and attacked Umbria and the Marches. A corps of French troops, under General Failly, was sent by the Emperor Napoleon to protect the Pope and to resist the Garibaldians, whose ultimate object was to obtain possession of Rome. The Garibaldians were

defeated by General Failly, and the French troops reoccupied the Papal territory. Garibaldi was wounded, taken prisoner, and kept in durance till sent back to his island of Caprera.

The Emperor was in a great dilemma. To withdraw his support from the Pope, and to deliver Rome to the cry of the Italians, would have raised against him the Clerical party in France, and might have seriously compromised his own interests and those of his dynasty. Although coveting an Italian alliance, he could not purchase it at the risk of his own throne. He was harassed by doubts and difficulties, and he turned to Europe to extricate him from the perplexities gathering around him.

At an interview with Count Bismarck on the 2nd of November, 1867, I referred to the complications of Italian affairs, and inquired in what light he viewed a possible appeal to an European Conference for their adjustment.

Count Bismarck replied that he had no wish to be called in to repair the mistakes of others, and he thought that it was imposing a rather hard task on Europe to extricate France and Italy from the confusion which they had themselves created. He, for his part, was not favourable to a Conference, and would be glad that Prussia should be saved from the embarrassment of it; but if others, and especially England, accepted the invitation, Prussia could not hold aloof, nor could Prussia, as a peace-loving country, refuse to aid in conciliating discordant elements,

and in thereby promoting the general interests of Europe.

His Excellency observed that Prussia could not fight against the Pope, on account of her Catholic subjects, neither could she fight for the support of the Papacy, as she would thereby risk offending her Protestant subjects. If, therefore, Prussia should decide to take part in an European Conference on the future position of the Pope, her representative in the Conference would be a passive listener to the proposals of those more directly interested, without taking any part in the discussions.

Russia, it was said, had accepted a Conference in principle, out of courtesy to France.

Austria had also accepted. As a Catholic Power she could not refuse her support to the Pope, but her position was embarrassing, between her Catholic hierarchy and the opposition evinced to the Concordat by public opinion in Austria-Hungary.

Count Bismarck said that if England declined he should be much disposed to take a similar course. He felt that there was little hope of success from a Conference. If the Pope should declare that he would not yield, of what good would be the decision of an European Conference? What could Europe do against his "*Non possumus*"?

He then spoke of the future position of the Pope and the revenues for his maintenance. He said that the Pope must be an independent Sovereign were he only possessor of ten or one hundred acres of ground.

The head of the Catholic Church could never be the subject of any Prince. As regarded the revenues for the maintenance of the Papacy, they were of a twofold nature. They were derived from the States of the Church, and from the offerings of the Roman Catholic Church throughout the world. The question, he thought, might be arranged by Italy compensating the Pope in the same manner as the King of Hanover had been compensated by Prussia. The Pope, he said, must have sufficient income to maintain the Papacy in a suitable manner.

Finally Count Bismarck said, having come to no decision as to the course to be taken, that he would give no reply, if officially invited to a Conference, without previous communication with Her Majesty's Government.

He suggested that if invited by France or Italy to take part in an European Conference, the following questions should be first put :—

1. Would the Pope be represented at the Conference?

2. Would the Pope beforehand agree to accept the decision of the Conference?

In the event of a negative answer, it appeared to Count Bismarck impossible that any good result would arise from a Conference, for how is the Pope to be dealt with if he persists in refusing to comply with the expressed wish of an European Conference?

He expressed himself as anxious that England and Prussia, who were similarly circumstanced as regards the

Roman question, should act together on this occasion and wished to know the opinions of Her Majesty's Government in reference to the acceptance of a Conference.

A formal invitation to the Conference was made to Count Bismarck by the French Ambassador in communicating a Circular-Despatch from the Marquis de Moustier to that effect. Count Bismarck replied that, while accepting the Conference in principle, there were several points on which further information was required before any definitive answer could be given. They were as follow:—(1) To whom had invitation been addressed, and where would the Conference meet (2) What was the basis for negotiations, and had the basis been accepted by Italy and the Pope? Count Bismarck further stated that before giving a definitive answer the Prussian Government must ascertain what were the views and opinions of the other Great Powers in regard to the Conference. No definitive answer could be given by the Prussian Government until they received some elucidation on the foregoing points.

I informed Count Bismarck of the answer which Lord Stanley had given to the French invitation to the Conference, and he expressed his great satisfaction at the perfect concurrence of views existing on this occasion between Her Majesty's Government and that of Prussia. He said that the replies of the French Government to the inquiries he had made had not been satisfactory or as full as he required. To the first

inquiry Count Benedetti had replied that Italy and the Pope had accepted the Conference, whereas the Italian Minister had informed him that his Government would only accept the Conference on certain conditions which were not yet fulfilled.

To the second inquiry Count Benedetti had replied that all the Powers had received invitations. Count Bismarck remarked that hitherto it had not been the custom to invite the minor Powers to take part in the decision of a great European question. The French Government had invited Saxony, a member of the North German Confederation, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, and Grand Ducal Hesse. It would have been more courteous if the French Government had consulted the other Great Powers before addressing these invitations. The difficulties of establishing a concert between the European Powers would be increased by the presence of so many representatives at a Conference, and the hopes of a successful result greatly diminished.

With regard to the programme, which was indispensable, no elucidation had been given. This might be obtained by the ordinary diplomatic channel, but he considered that the French Government must take the initiative by clearly stating what they had to propose as the means of placing on a satisfactory footing the relations between Italy and Rome. It was evident that without a programme the Prussian Government would not accept the Conference.

In a conversation I had with the King of Prussia,

His Majesty referred to the proposed Conference, and stated that he could not accept a Conference without a programme. He observed that with the conflicting opinions expressed by the French Minister—"that Rome must be preserved to the Pope," and the counter-opinion of Count Menabrea, "that Rome was as necessary to Italy as Paris was to France"—it was evident that no arrangement in a Conference could be attained, and that, consequently, a Conference would offer no practical solution of the question at issue between Rome and Italy.

His Majesty further stated that he could not support or guarantee the maintenance of the temporal power of the Pope, nor could he lend assistance to subvert that power, in regard to the duties he owed to his Catholic subjects. His Majesty, therefore, considered that the meeting of the Conference was impossible.

I observed to His Majesty that his Government and that of the Queen were placed in the same position, and that it was a great source of satisfaction to Her Majesty's Government to find that there existed a perfect concurrence in their views and opinions on this subject. I said that it was the wish of Her Majesty's Government to aid in extricating the Emperor of the French from an embarrassing position. The idea of a preliminary negotiation at Paris between the representatives of the Great Powers had been suggested with a view to arrange, if possible, the basis of an understanding. This preliminary negotiation, should it fail,

would enable the Emperor Napoleon to retreat from the proposed Conference without the appearance of a marked failure.

His Majesty perfectly concurred in this view, and said that he would readily assist in extricating the Emperor Napoleon from a position of embarrassment, provided no inconvenience should be caused thereby to his own subjects. He would have no objection to a preliminary negotiation of the nature referred to, for, in fact, its object would be to find a programme, which was the condition required before he could accept the Conference.

Thus matters stood, and with or without a Conference there appeared no hopes of inducing the Pope to come to an arrangement with Italy. The problem was not easy of solution, and especially with so unbending a Sovereign as the Pope. He must have seen that the exercise of his secular power had been uprooted, had yielded to the necessities of a progressive and civilised age, and was gone. Had he wisely yielded his temporal sovereignty, which he could no longer exercise to the advantage and contentment of his subjects, his position in the exercise of his spiritual powers would have been greatly reinforced. Under the military protection of Italy he would have been relieved of all cares of attack from without or within. He would have regained the affections of the Italian people, and would have ruled in peace over the millions of Catholics throughout the world, without the cares of political intrigues, and without the constant

opposition of a discontented and an ill-governed population.

A serious crisis now approached. French troops occupied Civita Vecchia and Rome. Garibaldi reappeared on the scene, and with his volunteers occupied Monte Rotundo, about ten miles from Rome, intending thence to advance on Tivoli and Rome. At Mentana he met the whole of the Papal troops, supported by a French force. A battle took place, in which the Garibaldians were defeated and completely dispersed, with great loss on both sides.

Garibaldi retired within the Italian territory, where he was again arrested by the Italian troops, and was confined, with his two sons, at a fort near Spezzia.

Shortly after, with a view to calm the public mind of Europe, which had been much agitated by these events, the French troops left Rome, and retired to Civita Vecchia, and the Italian troops withdrew from the Papal States within the Italian frontier. It was also hoped that by this conciliatory course on both sides an arrangement might be come to between the Italian Government and the Pope. I cannot sufficiently extol the wise, statesmanlike, and prudent course taken by Lord Stanley during this critical time, when at one moment a war between France and Italy appeared to be imminent. He was calm in judgment, and free from any enthusiastic impulse. He thoroughly mastered his subject before forming his opinion. Treating it, not on the surface, but as a round ball, he viewed it in all its aspects; and when his opinion

—a just one, as he deemed—was formed, he never deviated from it, and was firm and courageous in its maintenance. His speeches, without passion or eloquence, were marked by great lucidity and accuracy. His private letters, masterpieces of good sense and of consummate ability, were full of a kindly and generous feeling for others. He was too diffident of his own judgment, and this diffidence often arrested the execution of his own wise purposes. He was neither governed by party spirit, nor led astray in his opinions by personal inclinations. He was a thoroughly independent British statesman, and enjoyed, accordingly, the confidence and respect of all classes of the British public. No voice carried greater weight, nor was received with greater attention, than his.

With regard to the Roman question, Lord Stanley wrote to me that “the feeling in England was just what it should be—sympathy with Italy; regret at the French proceedings; but no desire that we, as a nation, should be mixed up in the affair.”

With regard to the Conference, he wrote to me as follows:—“To refuse offhand to go into a Conference is neither courtesy nor policy; to accept without further information than we possess would be madness. I can see nothing whatever to be gained by a discussion which can only end in disagreement.”

I give the foregoing citations as specimens of the sound wisdom and epigrammatic style of Lord Stanley's letters.

The speech of M. Rouher in the French Chamber,

in which he stated "that France would never permit Italy to be possessed of Rome," was the decisive blow to the meeting of a Conference. It prejudged the very question which the Conference would have had to decide, and consequently rendered it useless.

I now turn to another subject which was occupying public attention. Parliament in England had been summoned on the question of the Abyssinian Expedition.

Abyssinia is an almost inaccessible country at the entrance of the Red Sea, about four hundred miles long and three hundred miles broad. The natives were Christians of the Coptic Church, and in former times were possessed of some culture and refinement; but for a long period had become demoralised under the influence of religious superstition, as well as by civil wars and revolutions. The former dynasty, which claimed to be directly descended from the Queen of Sheba, had been superseded by the acting governor, who ruled as Emperor on seizing the throne.

In 1860 and 1861 certain missionaries arrived—some from England, some from Germany—for the sole purpose of converting the Falashas or Jews to Christianity. The Roman Catholic missionaries, who preceded them, were expelled in 1855, for attempting to convert the natives to Roman Catholicism. In 1863 the fury of King Theodore first showed itself against the English missionaries, who had faithfully

kept to their engagements, merely to convert the Jews to Christianity, and not to proselytise among the natives. King Theodore was very angry at receiving no answer to a letter he had addressed to the Queen. The correspondence of Captain Cameron, the British Consul, was seized and communicated to the King, who was furious at some expressions which he considered personally offensive. The servant of Captain Cameron—who had been interpreter to Mr. Stern, one of the missionaries—having used some expressions which displeased the King, he was, by order of the King, so beaten as to cause his death. Mr. Stern, unable to conceal the exasperation he felt at such horrid cruelty, “bit his thumb-nail,” which the Abyssinians regard as the greatest insult. Theodore ordered him to be seized and flogged, and he was placed in confinement. His papers were seized, and it was found that he had styled Theodore a “despot and tyrant.” He had also taken photographs of the neighbouring country, which were supposed to be for the purpose of an invasion, and this idea was confirmed by a visit of Captain Cameron to the border of the Egyptian territory. Theodore then ordered all the Europeans, with their wives and children and servants, to be chained and placed under confinement. This happened in November, 1863. The French Consul and a few more were released at the expiration of three or four months. In August, 1864, Mr. Rassam, an Armenian Christian attached to the Political Resident at Aden,

was sent by Her Majesty's Government to demand the release of the captives. He was not allowed to enter Abyssinia till the autumn of 1865. In the early part of 1866 he had an interview with Theodore, and, by his expostulations and the promise of valuable gifts, persuaded him to release all the prisoners. Theodore would not let them go till the promised gifts were received, and until some European workmen, for whom he had asked, had arrived. Mr. Rassam was likewise put in prison. Theodore was surrounded by rebels, and dared not venture to go to Magdala, where the captives were. His cruelties to his own people were atrocious, and his sovereignty menaced with danger.

It was impossible for Her Majesty's Government to remain passive under these insults and atrocities committed by King Theodore. The voice of humanity called for retribution and the deliverance of the captives. The prestige of England in the East required that condign punishment should be inflicted on the perpetrator of such abominable cruelties. The Government decided to send an expedition to Abyssinia to release the prisoners, and the command was entrusted to Sir Robert Napier. Parliament assented with little opposition, and voted the necessary supplies, while the action taken by the Government received the approval of the nation. It was a bold and costly undertaking, but was carried out with great skill and energy, and with perfect success.

The Cretan insurrection at this time was giving

some cause for anxiety. It was one of those symptoms of discontent on the one hand, and of ambition on the part of its promoters on the other, which are constantly arising in the East, to the disquiet of Europe.

It became at last a guerilla warfare. The Turks occupied the plains. The insurgents fled to the mountains, and only descended from their fastnesses to make raids on the plains. There appeared to be no likelihood of an end to this revolt so long as the flame was kept alive by Greek volunteers and Greek support.

Happily, the year 1867 ended peacefully, notwithstanding the great and small volcanoes which had, at its opening, threatened a general conflagration.

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CHAPTER IX.

State of Europe on Opening of 1868—Difficult Position of Count Bismarck—Happy Delivery of Crown Princess of a Son—Ball at British Embassy to their Prussian Majestics—Lord Derby retires from the Ministry—Mr. Disraeli appointed Premier—Presentation of fresh Credentials as Ambassador to North German Confederation—Conversation with Count Bismarck on Principalities—Visit of Prince Napoleon to Berlin—Interview with H.I.H.—Summary of the Political Situation of Prussia—Attempt at Sydney on the Life of the Duke of Edinburgh by an Irish Fenian—His Miraculous Escape—Abyssinian War and Successful Result—The King of Prussia's Wish to decorate Lord Napier of Magdala precluded by Strict Regulations of Our Service.

THE year 1868 opened peacefully. The professions in favour of peace were abundant, but the distrust of Europe still continued, and checked the revival of trade and industry. With the exception of certain mysterious rumblings (like those of a volcano) in the Christian provinces bordering Turkey and Greece, portending an early insurrection against Turkey, and the interminable Cretan revolt, fanned by Greece and imperilling the peaceful relations between that kingdom and the Porte, there were no questions of political interest which disturbed the European Cabinets.

“*La politique chôme*” was the lamentation of the Press of Europe, for the journalists, save what they invented, had nothing sensational to write.

There was a French saying that “When France is satisfied, Europe is tranquil.” This was not,

however, the case at the opening of 1868. France did not give evidence of being satisfied, and hence arose the prevailing distrust and disquietude in Europe as to the maintenance of peace. The political stagnation was merely a temporary calm in the uncertainty of what the morrow might bring forth.

I have little to relate during 1868 and 1869, and shall comment as cursorily as possible on the few subjects of interest which then occurred.

Although the Emperor of the French had passively accepted the changes in the organisation of Germany effected by the war of 1866, he was fully determined that no further encroachment or extension should be made by Prussia in Southern Germany. The presence of a Prussian soldier south of the Main would have stimulated French action. The cup was full ; a drop more would have made it overflow.

The position of the Emperor was exceedingly difficult. Public opinion had been much excited in France, and in the army especially, by the marvellous military successes of Prussia. With a feverish and excitable nation like the French, it was difficult to restrain or moderate its fitful outbursts of passion. I am confident that the personal desire of the Emperor was for peace, but he was obliged to take into account the public opinion of the nation, oftentimes influenced more by the vanity of prestige than by the consideration of its own interests.

The creation of an United Italy—raised to the rank of a Great Power on the southern frontier ; the

furtherance of German unity, already carried out in part, with an almost certain prospect of its early completion, thus forming a nation of forty millions on the eastern frontier; the fall of the Mexican Empire, with the severe pecuniary losses it imposed; and the humiliation of the Pope by the loss of his temporal power—a blow severely felt by the influential Clerical party in France—had greatly weakened the confidence of the French nation in the Emperor. It proved to be the actual negation of the Emperor's dogma in favour of "*les grandes agglomérations.*" So long as the Sovereign or head of the French nation is successful, he can count on the support of the nation. He loses it should he make a mistake, for the nation does not overlook or forgive an error in judgment on the part of its ruler.

This was the position in which the Emperor Napoleon found himself in 1868, and it could only be alleviated by an external action to satisfy the inflated vanity, the ardent craving "*pour la gloire,*" and the general uneasiness of public opinion in France.

War was spasmodically in everyone's mouth; it was as changeable as the barometer, according to the pressure of events. The period of its outbreak was uncertain, but it was regarded as inevitable in the feverish state of the French nation. The international relations between France and Prussia were much the same. The chiefs were pacific, though mutually distrustful. The majority of the peoples believed in war.

The first propitious event in 1868 was the happy

confinement, on February 10th, of the Crown Princess of a son. I signed, conjointly with Baron Schleinitz, the official protocol recording the happy event, and requested Lord Stanley to lay at the foot of the throne my heartfelt congratulations to the Queen.

On the 27th of January we gave a ball in honour of the birthday of Prince William (now Emperor William II.), eldest son of the Crown Prince and Princess, born in 1859, which was honoured by the presence of their Prussian Majesties and all the members of the Prussian Royal Family. The Queen retired at twelve o'clock, but the King remained for supper, and responded to my felicitations on the birthday of Prince William by proposing the health of Her Majesty the Queen our gracious Sovereign, and the healths of the Royal Family. The King was in good health, in high spirits, and gracious, as he always was.

At the end of February Lord Derby resigned the Premiership on account of his health. He had been long suffering from frequent attacks of gout, and his last prolonged illness, preventing him from taking part in the debates in the House of Lords, finally necessitated his withdrawal from office. His retirement was a great loss to his party, for he was the ablest debater and the brightest ornament of the House of Lords, and commanded the respect and esteem of the nation. Mr. Disraeli was charged by the Queen to take his place, and the following changes occurred in the *personnel* of the Cabinet:—Mr. Ward Hunt was made Chancellor of the Exchequer; Lord Cairns succeeded Lord Chelmsford as

Lord Chancellor; the Duke of Buckingham succeeded Lord Carnarvon as Colonial Secretary; Colonel Wilson Patten succeeded Lord Naas as Irish Secretary; Sir S. Northcote succeeded Viscount Cranborne as Secretary for India.

On the 31st of March I was accredited as Her Majesty's Ambassador to the North German Confederation, and had an audience of the King to present my credentials. I was received with the usual ceremony, royal carriages having been sent to conduct Her Majesty's Embassy to the palace. The King was very gracious and complimentary to me. The King did not like the title of "President" of the North German Confederation, as it savoured of a Republican institution, and my credentials were simply addressed to the King of Prussia, and I took especial care that the word "President" did not cross my lips.

The French Ambassador, Count Benedetti, and all the other Foreign Ministers likewise presented new credentials to His Majesty.

I may explain here that on occasions when royal equipages are sent for the use of an Ambassador, there is a tariff fixed by the Master of the Horse for the gratuity to the servants, which is paid into a fund in the Master of the Horse (or Grand Écuyer) department, which fund is divided at Christmas every year among those entitled to it.

At an interview with Count Bismarck I referred to certain reported movements in the Principalities—movements supposed to be directed against Turkey.

Count Bismarck said that he had received no official reports of this nature. He had always advised Prince Charles to pursue a moderate and conciliatory course, and to maintain friendly relations with the Porte and all the other Powers; but the Prussian Government had never interfered with or sought to exercise any influence over the Prince.

He did not apprehend any disturbance of the existing state of things in the East so long as Western Europe was at peace. He observed that "Prussia may incur great sacrifices and risks to obtain a great end. She may be induced, as in 1866, to play high stakes to win a great prize, but we have no interests to induce us to do so in the East. We should be risking much to gain nothing."

Count Bismarck said that Prince Charles had lost ground with Russia because he had favoured the Liberal party. His position was neither an easy nor an enviable one. His great wish was to establish a regular and honest administration, but the system of corruption was so deeply rooted among all classes that the elements of good government were difficult to find. In order to enforce the laws, and to ensure the peace and safety of the country, Prince Charles was endeavouring to form a permanent army, but the obstacles in his path were very great. In short, Count Bismarck argued that order and good government were foreign to the wishes and usages of a population which for many years had been a prey to every species of corruption and misgovernment.

The intended visit of Prince Napoleon to Berlin created some sensation. No official notification of it was addressed either to the Government or the Court. It was a private visit, sanctioned by the Emperor. The Prince travelled strictly *incognito* as Count de Meudon, declining all honours, and was accompanied by three aides-de-camp.

He arrived at Berlin on the 6th of March, and called on Count Bismarck immediately on his arrival, having a long interview with His Excellency. He then paid his respects to the King and Queen of Prussia, and visited the members of the Prussian Royal Family. Court equipages were placed at his disposal. On the day of his arrival a State dinner was given to him by the King, at which the several members of the Royal Family and the French Embassy were present.

His Imperial Highness was received with every mark of attention by their Prussian Majesties and the Prussian Court.

The visit of Prince Napoleon to Berlin on a supposed "secret" mission was an event which could not fail to excite public attention, and gave rise to much comment and speculation. He received every mark of respect. He was present at two concerts at the palace. Prince Charles and Prince Albert (brothers of the King) gave dinners in his honour. Count Bismarck gave him an official banquet (at which I was present), and on the following day the Prince honoured Her Majesty's Embassy with his presence at dinner,

to which Count Bismarck, Count Benedetti, and the Foreign Ministers accepted invitations. Prince Napoleon visited the museums, public buildings, and the various palaces at Potsdam, and received a great many literary persons of various denominations. No one appeared to have clearly ascertained the motive of his visit. Count Bismarck told me that he had had some conversation with him on political questions, but that they referred rather to the past than to the present or the future. This was corroborated to me from another quarter; and it was mentioned that His Imperial Highness had specially dilated on the faults which had been committed by the French Government during the period antecedent to the late war. It was, however, somewhat difficult to understand for what special motive His Imperial Highness reasoned on a topic from which no essential benefit could then result, unless it might have been with a view to admonition for the future.

I had a long conversation with His Imperial Highness on the day after his arrival. It then appeared to me that his attention was mostly, if not entirely, occupied with the present and future of Germany. He disclaimed any identification with the present Ministry or policy of France, and frankly said that he was in opposition to the Government, and that, consequently, his opinions were purely private and personal. He spoke of the reconstruction of Germany, saying that what had been done was now a *fait accompli*, and recognised by France. He did not seem to entertain any hopes, or even a wish, that what had been so

far effected could be altered. He even said that the absorption of the smaller Northern States was of no importance to France. "But," observed His Imperial Highness, "the unification of Germany under Prussia is still in progress. The Zollverein Parliament is a step further to the absorption of Southern Germany. Where is this to end? What limit is to be placed to the Germany of the future—or, rather, to Prussia? France has accepted the boundary of Northern Germany to the Main, as laid down by the Treaty of Prague. The entry of the Southern States is inevitable—it is only a work of time. Can France—can Europe—look quietly on and witness passively this absorbing process without requiring some guarantee as to the limits which shall constitute Germany? What would Europe say if France were to enter into a similar Zollverein Treaty with Belgium, and if Belgian representatives should sit in a Parliament assembled at Paris? Why, the Powers would instantly raise their voices against the absorption of Belgium and the obliteration of her existence as an independent State!

"Then, again," said His Imperial Highness, "if the principle of nationality is carried out—the only legitimate grounds for such a policy—what will become of the eight millions of Austro-Germans? Will their turn come next? And how will it be possible for them to avoid being drawn into the same vortex?

"It may be very well to say that Germany is not an aggressive Power, but who can say when she may not become so? and that she may not some day

reclaim Alsace and Lorraine, or seek to unite within her boundaries the Russo-German provinces of the Baltic?

“The Germany of to-day under Prussia has united thirty millions. When the Southern States shall join, she will have an additional eight millions; and if the Austro-German provinces should later fall within her grasp, Germany will form a vast national amalgamation of nearly fifty millions of people.

“I have no objection,” His Imperial Highness went on, “to the limits laid down by the Treaty of Prague. They are a *fait accompli*; and France has, wisely or not, accepted them. But I want to know—is that arrangement to be looked upon as *final*? If Southern Germany is still to follow in the wake, I again say, Let it be so. But what concessions will Germany and Prussia be prepared to make in return for this aggrandisement? If the principle of absorption is to be thus passively permitted by Europe, why should not others absorb likewise?

“You English have chosen to withdraw yourselves from the political arena of Europe, and this abstention of England from active participation in European politics is a great misfortune for Europe, and will later prove to be a great misfortune for herself. You pretend to abstain from interfering in European affairs except on questions which directly affect your interests; but is not this question of Germany one which affects the well-being and peace of Europe? and must it not consequently concern the interests of your country?”

“Look at past history! Europe is now suffering from the wrongs committed in Poland.

“There are two points on which England keeps a watchful and jealous eye—namely, Belgium and Constantinople. If an idea is ever mooted which could menace the independence of Belgium, England will immediately raise her voice. If Russia discloses any secret design on Constantinople, there again you raise a cry of alarm. But as regards the change brought about and in operation in Germany you are apparently apathetic, and foresee no danger likely to affect your interests.

“The present state of things is intolerable, and cannot last, for there is no basis of international law. Treaties are no sooner signed than they are violated. Old landmarks have been torn down, and no fixed ones have taken their place. There is consequently nothing but confusion and insecurity, and the result must necessarily be some great catastrophe, which, if the statesmen of Europe had foresight and courage, might be averted. If they continue in their present apathy, they will be awakened some morning by a *coup de tonnerre*.

“Let a Germany be constituted, but let its limits be fixed and final, so that it may not be led to aspire to future aggrandisement; and let the arrangement concluded be placed under an European guarantee.

“If you English,” continued the Prince, “remain in your present state of abstention from European affairs, you will some day see that Russia will profit by the moment when we shall be otherwise engaged to

seize Constantinople, and, having obtained her prize, will leave Prussia in the lurch. To us, in such a moment, the Eastern question will be of secondary consequence in comparison with our interests nearer home.

“How would you be able, single-handed, to oppose Russia in the East? You will have to submit to a *fait accompli*, which will seriously affect your prestige, if not your interests, in the East. If in a war with Prussia we should be victorious, we can make peace by compensating ourselves. We shall not expend our blood and treasure for nothing.”

In replying to His Imperial Highness, I confined myself to general observations, the more so as it was not my wish to enter into a discussion with the Prince on the various topics on which he had enlarged. I was rather desirous of learning from him the opinions on the state of political affairs of those who moved in the same circle at Paris as His Imperial Highness. I observed that I could not see what either France or Germany could gain by a war which would be ruinous to both. Both were great and powerful nations, which could well live in peace with each other, enriching each other with the produce of their industry and trade without rivalry or strife. I did not believe, I went on, that Germany would ever become an aggressive Power to her neighbours—it was not in her nature to be so—and the military power of Prussia, though formidable for defence, was not so for aggression. The Landwehr was composed of that class which was the

least disposed for military glory or conquest. If the country was in danger, there was no sacrifice which they would not endure for its defence; but it would be quite another consideration if they were called upon to quit their families, their homes, their avocations, solely for the sake of conquest.

As regarded Eastern policy, I observed that the other Powers were equally interested with ourselves in preventing Russia from seizing Constantinople; nor did I think that Russia, even if so inclined, was in a position to undertake so hazardous a policy.

I then inquired of Prince Napoleon (as I thought I might discover the motive of his mission, if he had one) what remedy he would suggest for averting the catastrophe in Europe which he apprehended, and to which he had so forcibly alluded. Was it a Congress?

The Prince replied that in his opinion the several Governments of Europe should "*causer ensemble*," and come to an understanding before any Congress could be held. "If peace is to be preserved, it can only be preserved," he said, "by a cordial and frank understanding between the Powers of Europe on all questions which are now in a state of half-solution. If some such course is not taken, if the present apathy of European statesmen continues, and if some definite and settled state for Europe is not agreed upon, a catastrophe sooner or later will overtake them, when they will have to face the storm which by timely prudence and foresight they might have prevented."

As to the motive of the Prince's visit to Berlin, I could but surmise, from the tenor of his conversation, that it was to sound Prince Bismarck on the subject of compensation to France, and especially in regard to Belgium. In my mind there was no doubt that, however divested of the appellation of a "secret mission," it was undertaken under the authority and with the sanction of the Emperor, if not at his initiative. It was probably for the purpose of shadowing forth the principle that without compensation France would not tolerate any further aggrandisement of Prussia. It was the voice of seduction in the one case, or the voice of warning in the other.

He was very well pleased with his reception by the King and Count Bismarck. I could, however, extract nothing from him in regard to the opinions expressed by Count Bismarck further than that he had been assured that the session of the Zollverein Parliament would pass off quietly without any demonstration as regarded the entry of the South German States into the North German Confederation.

In regard to this visit I received the following private letter from Paris, written after the return there of Prince Napoleon. It said :—

The Prince returned a few days ago, and has reported to his cousin the result of his mission. Although much secrecy is preserved as regards his communication, nevertheless, in intimate circles, so much has transpired as to prove that the mission has entirely failed in its object, and even no basis for further negotiations has been agreed upon. The Prince found

the Berlin Court, and especially Count Bismarck, more reserved than he had expected; and although very much satisfied with his personal reception, still it appears that he has brought back a certain animosity against the present and supposed future policy of the Prussian Government. As regarded the overtures respecting the Oriental difficulties, he found only a deaf ear; and in regard to the internal German policy of the Prussian Cabinet, it appears that he was put off with general observations and assurances. The intimate conviction of the Prince was, as I am told, that Count Bismarck has certain plans in view, and is, therefore, anxious not to engage his foreign policy in a compromising manner. Among these plans the Prince suspected especially the intention, on the meeting of the Zollverein Parliament, of making a step towards the unification of Germany, and it is the intention here [Paris] to keep a sharp look-out.

The day before the arrival of the Prince at Berlin, Count Benedetti read to Count Bismarck a despatch from the Marquis de Moustier, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, denying that there was any political object attached to his visit; and on the day he arrived, Count Goltz, the Prussian Ambassador at Paris, telegraphed to say that the Emperor had disavowed beforehand any political language he might hold. But while in Berlin the Prince sent off a letter to the Emperor, and received a reply before he left; and on the day after his return to Paris he had a long interview with the Emperor, at the close of which the Marquis de Moustier was summoned to the Tuileries. In all these mysterious machinations one thing only is certain—that Prince Napoleon did not take back in his pocket any offer of compensation to France.

Prince Napoleon later in the year visited Vienna; for

what purpose I was not informed, but probably on a visit of discovery and curiosity. I was told that he had expressed a wish to go to Prague and Cracow, but, finding that his wish was not agreeable to the Austrian Government, he gave it up.

It may be well here to review the internal position of affairs, and to mark the difficulties which surrounded the path of Count Bismarck. He had had to meet the Prussian "Landtag," which was immediately succeeded by the "Federal Parliament of the North German Confederation," which was followed by the "Zollverein," or Customs Union, Parliament—or, to use Count Bismarck's own words to me, "the Parliamentary cauldron was kept boiling."

In writing to Lord Stanley I described the position as follows:—

The first meeting of a representative body (forming the Zollverein Parliament), in which all Germany was represented, with the exception of the German provinces of Austria, is an event of great importance, both as regards the political and material interests of the Fatherland. It is the first occasion since the convocation of the National Assembly at Frankfort in 1848 that the German nation has been represented in one assembly, and there is no doubt that the meeting of representatives from all Germany will be hailed by the nation with a feeling of patriotic ardour and national pride.

But it is not possible to enter on the question of the Zollverein Parliament without reverting also to the present attributes and position of the Federal Parliament. Since the opening of the session no question of any vital importance has been discussed, but nevertheless Count Bismarck has encountered a strong opposition, and in one instance has sustained a Parliamentary defeat.

There were two questions on which the Liberal party raised an opposition to Count Bismarck—namely, (first) on the subject of the payment of the deputies, as in the case of the representatives in the Prussian Chamber; and (secondly) on a motion for the introduction of a Federal law to protect all representatives in the Parliaments of the Federal States from prosecution for speeches delivered in the Federal Parliament.

On the former Count Bismarck maintained the views he had previously expressed when a similar motion was introduced on the discussion of the Federal Constitution. He then declared that it was only on condition of the non-payment of the deputies that he had assented to the electoral law of universal suffrage. He steadfastly resisted the motion, which was negatived by a majority of only five votes.

On the second question (the freedom of debate) the motion of Herr Lasker was carried against the Government by a majority of some sixty votes. In the discussion a doubt was expressed as to the competency of the Federal Parliament to interfere by legislation with the criminal code existing in the States of the Confederation, and Count Bismarck, although expressing a wish that the measure should be agreed to, felt himself bound to support the view taken by some of the Federal States. He promised, however, to use his influence with the Prussian Parliament for the passing of a law of this nature, and suggested that a similar course should be taken by the several Parliaments of the Federal States.

This rather unexpected opposition on the part of the Federal Parliament, the disruption of the Conservative party, which had hitherto given to Count Bismarck their undivided support, and the strong anti-Prussian current as manifested by the late elections in Southern Germany to the Zollverein Parliament, have, I am told, all combined in producing an unfavourable impression on the mind of Count Bismarck, who clearly sees the difficulties with which he is surrounded, and feels keenly the arduous responsibility of carrying out the work which he had so successfully commenced.

But among the difficulties to which I have alluded, there is one consideration of paramount importance to which I will briefly refer.

When the Federal Constitution was first elaborated, the fever and excitement of war had scarcely subsided. It was compiled in haste, without much consideration. It was voted without much reflection or discussion. It is now found to be deficient in many respects, and impracticable in execution. The machinery, from being incomplete, cannot work. There is no responsible Federal Ministry for carrying into execution the Federal legislation. The Chancellor (Count Bismarck) is the only responsible Minister. He is the sole actor on the stage. For instance, a Federal law was passed last year empowering a loan of ten millions of thalers for the purposes of the Federal navy, but there is no Federal Minister of Marine to supervise and carry out the undertaking.

There is a Federal army of 300,000 men, but there is no Ministry of War responsible for its administration.

There is a Federal revenue of some eighty or a hundred millions of thalers, but there is no Federal Minister of Finance to administer the funds.

The whole weight of power and responsibility is centralised in the Federal Chancellor, who in reality exercises a far greater influence than the President of the Confederation—namely, the King.

This deficiency in the Federal Constitution is becoming daily more apparent, and in connection with this question arises another of equal importance—namely, whether the several local Parliaments of the Federal States can continue to exist coëvally and coëqually with the Federal Parliament at Berlin without confusion, and possibly without collision.

It appears to me that at no distant period these Parliaments (the Prussian included) will merge into merely provincial Diets for local purposes. Such a change will necessarily lead to the abolition of the separate Ministries of the Federal States, which will be replaced by a Federal responsible Ministry for the

whole Confederation. It will then become necessary to have an Upper Legislative House, composed of and representing the aristocracy of the Confederated States, and, as a natural consequence, the King of Prussia, in lieu of being "President," would assume the Imperial title.*

But these changes will necessitate the mediatisation of Prussia, and to this measure, as far as I can judge, there will be no more strenuous opponent than the King of Prussia himself.

The great question to be solved will be between "*Preussenthum*" or "*Deutschthum*"—"Prussianism" or "Germanism." Shall Germany be merged into Prussia, or Prussia into Germany?

It is possible, and even probable, that the eventualities to which I have referred may be deferred, and that some years may elapse before they are brought to maturity; but events progress rapidly in these days, and the calculations of the wisest statesmen are often disappointed by their development. In the foregoing sketch of the present position and future prospects of the North German Confederation (1868), I may possibly have been led too far into speculative considerations, but it will, at all events, tend to elucidate the difficulties and deficiencies of the present Federal organisation, whatever course may be later adopted for their removal or correction.

In acknowledging this political sketch, Lord Stanley wrote to me as follows:—

I have seldom read a more interesting or lucid summary of a political situation than that contained in your letter of Monday, and the Prime Minister (Mr. Disraeli), to whom I forwarded it, quite agrees in that opinion.

This was very gratifying to me.

In April, 1868, the sad news was received in England that a murderous attempt had been made on the life of the Duke of Edinburgh by a Fenian

* This was written in 1868; great changes have since taken place.

miscreant named O'Farral, at Sydney. His Royal Highness, who had arrived at Sydney after visiting the other Australian colonies, in command of the *Galatea*, had been attending a *fête* given in his honour in the neighbourhood. On descending the hill to embark in his launch he was shot in the back by O'Farral. The Duke was conveyed by water to Government House at Sydney, where he received immediate surgical aid. Fortunately the ball had not pierced a vital part, and was extracted, but his escape was miraculous.

This atrocious attempt produced throughout the colony a thrill of horror and indignation, and called forth that outburst of loyalty to the Queen and Royal Family which is rooted in every Australian heart. Happily, the miscreant was arrested, convicted, tried, and hanged.

From what transpired at the trial, it would appear that he was a member of a Fenian society, and had been drawn by lot to commit the atrocious crime, which, it was supposed, was an act of vengeance for the execution of the Fenian perpetrators of the Manchester outrage.

In the early part of 1868 the Abyssinian War was happily and most successfully brought to a close by the capture of Magdala, the suicide of King Theodore, and the liberation of the captives, concerning whose fate, in the hands of a barbarous tyrant, grave apprehensions had been entertained. The expedition had been conducted with the most marvellous foresight, skill, and energy, through an unknown and most difficult country, with no roads, barricaded, as it were,

by high mountains, and unprovided even with any means of supplying the commissariat. It was under the command of an able, vigorous, and courageous leader, Sir Robert Napier, who inspired all subject to his command with the same feelings of bravery, self-devotion, and confidence that he himself possessed.

On the 17th of April the fortress was captured and blown up, and the troops immediately set out on their homeward return for the sea-coast.

The King of Prussia, Count Bismarck, and the military authorities had taken, on military grounds, the greatest interest in the campaign, and some surprise was evinced, considering the costliness of the expedition, that immediately on its object being attained—namely, the liberation of the captives—we should have evacuated the country. They evidently had not given credit to the disinterested motives which had actuated England in the humane course she had taken.

The success of the expedition, in which a portion of our native Indian army had been actively employed beyond the confines of India, the discipline of our army, and the admirable organisation of the whole expedition, produced a profound impression of the power and equity of Great Britain, for the inoffensive inhabitants of Abyssinia were unmolested, their services were largely remunerated, and nothing was required from them without payment. The campaign raised the prestige, as well as the greatness, of England in all Oriental countries.

The captives—of various nationalities—numbered

above sixty, and amongst them were several Germans, with their wives and children. At dinner I sat next to M. von der Heydt, the Prussian Minister of Finance, on the day that the news arrived at Berlin, and I mentioned that I presumed he would gladly furnish a million or so for our liberation of the German captives, adding that one of them gloried in the name of "Schiller," and, of course, the price of his liberation would be high. The suggestion gave him rather a start, for he answered nervously, thinking I was serious in my observation.

Among the booty taken were four gold crowns, some jewellery, and about 20,000 dollars, besides arms. I discovered that one of the crowns had been appropriated by Dr. Rohlfs, a Prussian who had accompanied the expedition by permission of Sir Robert Napier. On the return of Dr. Rohlfs to Berlin he presented this crown to the King, and it was exhibited at the museum. I took steps to have the facts of the case brought to the knowledge of His Majesty, who immediately ordered the crown to be sent to Her Majesty the Queen.

Count Bismarck called on me to offer his congratulations on the successful issue of the campaign and the liberation of the captives. The King was anxious to confer the military grand cross of the Red Eagle on Sir R. Napier (to whom a peerage had been given by the Queen, under the title of Lord Napier of Magdala), in testimony of his admiration of his great military achievement; but, in consequence of the strictness of our regulations, he was not able to accept it.

CHAPTER X.

Assassination of Prince Michael of Servia—Interview with M. Ristich—Movement in Principalities—Supposed Participation of Russia refuted—Revolution in Spain—Flight of Queen Isabella—Audience of the King—His Wish to maintain *status quo* in Germany—Change of Ministry in England—Lord Clarendon Foreign Secretary—Sir A. Otway Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs—Turco-Greek Differences—Count Bismarck's Opinion—Press Warfare between Austria and Prussia—Visit of Prince and Princess of Wales—Arrival of the Prince of Montenegro—Opening of Jahde by the King—*Minotaur* sent to greet Him—Dispute between France and Belgium on Sale of Luxembourg Railway—Amicably arranged—Arrival of Viceroy of Egypt—Retirement of Count Bismarck from Prussian Ministry—Dinner with the King at Babelsberg—Conversation with His Majesty—Prince La Tour d'Auvergne appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs at Paris—Crown Prince's Journey to the East—Audience of the King—Order of St. George conferred on the King—The Prussian Military Order of Merit conferred on the Czar—Hospitable Reception of General Sir W. Codrington and British Officers attending Autumnal Review.

THE distressing intelligence from Belgrade of the assassination of Prince Michael Obrenowich of Servia, on June 13th, 1868, caused some sensation at Berlin. I was personally acquainted with him and his wife—a very handsome, charming person—who was a Countess Hunyadi, the daughter of a Hungarian magnate. He was a mild, inoffensive, and benevolent ruler. It was generally believed that it was an act of personal revenge on the part of the assassin, and not one of a political nature. The Porte conveyed, by a telegram to the Provisional Government which was immediately formed (the Prince having died without children), its condolence

and recognition, stating that the composition of the Provisional Government offered the desired guarantee for the maintenance of order in the Principality, and for the regularity of the election of a successor to Prince Michael. Aali Pacha, the Grand Vizier, added that the Porte was most desirous the Servian nation should exercise its right of election with all the freedom compatible with the maintenance of public order, and in conformity with the law.

On the very day of the assassination I had received M. Ristich, the Servian agent, who had been sent on a mission to the Great Powers to negotiate a modification of the consular jurisdiction. I inquired of him how the question of succession in Servia then stood, as I had heard that Prince Michael, who was empowered to name his successor, subject to the assent of the Skuptchina (the Servian Parliament), had some intention of adopting a young Karageorgievitch. The truth of this report M. Ristich denied, however, and said that the Prince, if he had made a will—which he doubted—would probably have named as his successor his cousin, Prince Milan, a youth of fourteen years, then at Paris for his education.

There had been of late much movement and many intrigues carrying on in all the Danubian Principalities, and it was feared that this lamentable incident might be the spark which would explode the powder magazine which General Ignatieff, the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople, had said “these Turkish provinces represented.”

I was much amused by an answer given by Fuad Pacha to General Ignatieff. The latter tried to sound Fuad as to whether he believed that "Russia had instigated the Bulgarian movement against Turkey." Fuad replied that "he did not believe in that accusation, but if he were asked to defend Russia from the accusation, he had no means of doing so."

It was rumoured that Russia had participated in the anti-Turkish agitation which for some time past had been observable in the Christian provinces of Turkey, with a view to embarrass and weaken the Porte, but I believe that these rumours were without foundation. On the contrary, I had the fullest conviction that the Emperor was most anxious for the maintenance of the European peace; and the action of his Government, both in regard to the Principalities and in regard to the Cretan insurrection, had been entirely in that sense. There was, however, an active Slavonic party at St. Petersburg—even in the vicinity of the throne—which was constantly weaving webs of intrigues, independently of the Government, in order to liberate the Principalities from Turkish rule, and to place them under the protectorate of Russia. Towards the end of 1868 there was a general lull in Europe, and a manifest desire on the part of all the European Powers to maintain peace. The relations between Prussia and France were friendly, if not cordial, and there was no political question tending to mark any disturbance of them. Russia had given proofs of her wish for peace by discouraging the

enemies of disorder in the Principalities. France was tranquil, and watchful as to Prussian policy in Germany; but there was no diminution of animosity in France against Prussia, on the part of the army especially, although the desire of the Emperor and of his Government was for peace.

There were two events in the autumn of 1868 which occupied the attention of Europe—first, the revolution in Spain and the dethronement of the Queen Isabella; secondly, a rupture of relations between Turkey and Greece.

The revolution in Spain had been long preparing. Queen Isabella had offended all parties, and disappointed all the bright hopes which had been entertained of the future of a youthful Sovereign whose crown had been gained for her after many years of civil war by a loyal and devoted people. She had alienated from her all her political friends, and exiled or cast off the only statesmen capable of serving her and securing her throne. The last acts of exiling the military chiefs to the Canaries, and even her own sister and her husband (the Duke of Montpensier), were sufficient to cause the cup of national indignation to overflow.

The Queen was at San Sebastian, and the events passed so rapidly that her return to Madrid was impossible. The whole country was up in arms, and had joined the revolutionary party. She accordingly took refuge in France, and on repairing to Biarritz was received by the Emperor and Empress of the French

with every attention and mark of sympathy which misfortune can claim. She then proceeded to Paris where the Emperor placed the Imperial château at her disposal.

Marshal Serrano and General Prim were the leaders of the popular party, and a Provisional Government was formed, of which they were the leading members. They were supported by the army, which had fraternised with the people, and the revolution was triumphant in all the provinces. A Constituent Assembly was convoked by universal suffrage to decide the form of government to be established. The work of reconstruction proceeded in an orderly manner, and but few excesses took place. The majority of the leaders were in favour of a true Constitutional Monarchy, and were opposed to a Republic.

The revolution and the dethronement of the dynasty in Spain produced less sensation in Europe than it would have done in the days of the Holy Alliance. The Powers of Europe were too occupied with their own internal affairs to allow of their interfering in the affairs of other States, and they were consequently in favour of the principle of non-intervention; nor indeed, would the proud Spanish people—a high-blooded race—have for one moment permitted foreign interference. They had acted with great circumspection and were amenable to their leaders—there was no confusion, no plunder, no revenge. The attention of Europe was mainly directed to France and the course which the Emperor Napoleon would take. His attempt

at "king-making" had not been successful in Mexico, and it was not encouraging to him to repeat it. His only dangers were a Republic or an Orleans Prince, but any attempt to put down even a Spanish Republic would have been equally full of danger in regard of his own people.

The Emperor wisely decided for the principle of non-intervention, and acted on the same lines with the other European Powers—viz., to maintain unofficial relations with the Provisional Government, but to accept or give no fresh credentials until there was a constituted authority in Spain.

There was a report at Berlin early in October, 1868, that the crown of Spain might be offered to Leopold, the hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern,* who was married to a sister of the King of Portugal, and was the elder brother of Prince Charles of Roumania. In mentioning this report to Lord Stanley (privately), I then observed that, if this prince were selected, this choice would be viewed with jealousy and disfavour at Paris.

There was another report at the same time—originating, I believe, with the Italian Government—in favour of placing the King of Portugal on the throne of Spain, thus joining Portugal with Spain under one Sovereign, but it very quickly evaporated. I then wrote to Lord Stanley that it was useless to speculate on the future of

* This was the same Prince of Hohenzollern whose candidature for the throne of Spain in 1870 was the pretext on the part of France for the war between that country and Prussia in that year.

Spain, where anything and everything was possible, but that I could not imagine the pride of the Spanish nation would ever permit it to be governed by a foreign prince.

I had an audience of the King early in December, on my return to my post from England. His Majesty expressed his satisfaction that the aspect of political affairs in Europe offered every hope of peace. He said that he had read with pleasure Lord Stanley's speech to the electors of King's Lynn, and that he concurred completely in his opinions respecting Germany. His Majesty stated that a fusion of Southern Germany with the Northern States must eventually take place; that it could not be carried out by forcible means, but rather by the influence of circumstances and of time; that His Majesty did not expect to see it realised in his day—perhaps not even in his son's lifetime, and that its final accomplishment might be reserved for his grandson. The process might be slow, but the result would not be the less sure. His Majesty said he had expressed himself in a similar sense to Prince Napoleon, to Lord Clarendon at Wiesbaden, and to the Chevalier Nigra at Baden.

His Majesty said that no pressure to achieve this end would be exercised by his Government, and he even considered that the impatience of the Grand Ducal Government of Baden to join the Northern Confederation was rather an embarrassment than advantageous to the interests of Prussia and of Germany.

I replied that I was happy to hear from His Majesty

that his Government intended to pursue this wise and prudent course. It was, I said, the opinion of the English statesmen with whom I had conversed during my stay in London, that the preservation of the peace of Europe depended on the maintenance of the present *status quo*. Time, I observed to His Majesty, was a powerful calmer of the passions. It was, in many instances, the most potent and successful mediator, and rendered easy the solution of questions which, at their outset, appeared impracticable or fraught with danger.

I exemplified this opinion by citing the questions which had been for some time in abeyance between Great Britain and America, and I observed that after a lapse of time those questions, which, if they had been prematurely brought under discussion, might have led to war, had now, under skilful management, been happily and finally arranged.

His Majesty entirely coincided in this view, and again expressed his opinion that the union of Northern and Southern Germany must be left to time and the spontaneous action of public opinion for its solution.

I then observed to His Majesty that the present disturbed state of Roumania appeared to be the dark spot on the political horizon, and that Her Majesty's Government had learnt with great satisfaction the counsels and warning lately given by his Majesty's Government to Prince Charles.

The King replied that the suspicions which had been entertained as to the attitude of his Government towards Roumania were wholly false and groundless.

From the very commencement he had disapproved of the acceptance by Prince Charles of the government of the Principalities, and he had done all he could to dissuade both father and son from embarking in this venturous enterprise. He was not responsible for the course pursued, but His Majesty added that he should not permit the interests of Prussia to be compromised by a member of his family. His Majesty expressed a hope that Prince Charles would in future pursue a prudent and conciliatory course.

On taking leave of the King, His Majesty expressed the hope that his relations with England would continue to be, as heretofore, on the most cordial footing, and that both should unite their endeavours for the maintenance of the peace of Europe.

On the 9th of December, 1868, the Ministry of Mr. Disraeli resigned, and was succeeded by a Ministry under the Premiership of Mr. Gladstone, when Lord Clarendon reoccupied the post of Foreign Affairs, which he had previously so ably filled. On leaving the Foreign Office, which he had administered since 1866 with great ability, Lord Stanley addressed to me the following letter :—

I cannot allow our official connection to end without one line from me to thank you for the full, interesting, and always accurate intelligence which you have been in the habit of sending, and which made me look forward to the arrival of the Berlin messenger as an agreeable relief from the labours of the week.

Lord Clarendon, I know, will follow in the track which events and public opinion have marked out for every English

Minister—that of assisting, if possible, to keep the peace of Europe without compromising our own.

(Signed) STANLEY.

His Excellency the Lord A. Loftus.

I was very pleased to receive this letter, thus recognising the fulfilment of my wish to do my duty to my Queen and country.

I had also a kind letter from Lord Clarendon, which he ended as follows :—“ I have great pleasure, my dear Loftus, in renewing official relations with you.”

Mr. Otway (now Sir Arthur Otway) was appointed Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. No better choice could have been made. He was an able man, well versed in all questions of foreign policy, and, from his knowledge of Continental affairs and foreign languages, was especially fitted for this important post. His father, Admiral Sir Robert Otway, was a distinguished officer, and an intimate friend of the late King William IV. I was much attached to Sir Robert Otway, from whom in my early youth I had received many kindnesses, and his son, the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, was my oldest and most valued friend.

The Turco-Greek question, to which I have previously referred, was occupying European attention and causing some anxiety.

The smallest cloud in the Eastern horizon always produces a certain disquietude in Europe, for with fanaticism on the one hand, and ambition on the other,

it can never be clearly foreseen what may be the sphere which the storm may envelop.

This was especially the case in the present instance, and the rupture of diplomatic relations between Turkey and Greece, following so rapidly upon the events of the Cretan insurrection, was an inauspicious omen for the peace of the East.

It appeared that, from some cause insufficiently explained, the Porte had decided, after a certain date, to expel all Greeks from the Turkish dominions, including even Egypt and the outlying provinces.

Count Bismarck expressed to me his disapproval of the proposed expulsion. He said that, in the first place, it would be impracticable on account of their numbers, and that it would be a dangerous measure as regarded Turkey. It would give rise to conflict and bloodshed at every corner of the Empire, and would involve Turkey in endless difficulties. He was of opinion that the simple act of closing the Turkish ports to Greek vessels would prove a more efficient means of compulsion, as the Greek commerce in the East was very considerable, and the cessation of it would inflict serious losses on the Greek population.

He expressed a hope that the protecting Powers would use their influence, both in Greece and at Constantinople, to pacify the litigants, and that their efforts would avail to prevent any serious collision.

He said that he could not quite recollect the exact nature of the five points contained in the Turkish ultimatum. There was, however, one point which

appeared to him to be opposed to the Constitution to which the King was bound—namely, the freedom for Greek subjects to fit out vessels for purposes of trade.

Count Bismarck was convinced that the Russian Government were sincere in their desire to bring about a settlement of the differences.

On the 22nd of December my French colleague and I dined with the King. His Majesty expressed to us both his satisfaction that the Porte had agreed to grant a further delay for the expulsion of the Greek subjects residing in Turkey, and His Majesty seemed to entertain a hope that the quarrel between Turkey and Greece would be satisfactorily arranged. For this end, His Majesty said, it was most desirable that a perfect agreement should exist between the European Powers.

The Turco-Greek Conference met at Paris. In conversation with me on its deliberations Count Bismarck referred to the withdrawal from the Conference of the Greek Plenipotentiary, and observed that the Porte might fulfil its threat of retiring likewise, unless all the points of its ultimatum were accepted; in which case he was of opinion that the Powers should continue their deliberations and come to a verdict, and prevent a conflict between the two litigants—or, as he termed it, the Powers should act in the character of the European police. If such a proposal should be made in the Conference, Prussia would support it; but, not being so deeply interested in Eastern affairs as the other Powers, she would not take the initiative of such a proposal.

I observed that on accepting the Conference, Her Majesty's Government made it clearly known that they did not contemplate the adoption of any coercive measures, and I felt very doubtful of their agreeing to any such proposal. He replied that Russia was very desirous of peace; and he seemed to think that if the other Powers were unanimous, Russia would likewise join in enforcing the verdict of Europe.

Unfortunately there sprang up at this time a violent Press warfare between Austria and Prussia, which considerably embittered the relations between the two Governments. The responsibility was cast on Count Beust, who was known to be antagonistic to Prussia, and especially inimical to Count Bismarck. Lord Clarendon, who had been appealed to, and was always ready to establish harmony where discord existed, succeeded temporarily in appeasing the elements of wrath, but his kindly efforts only produced a truce of short duration. Count Bismarck was very anxious to cultivate cordial relations with Austria, and took the initiative in causing a semi-official article to be inserted in the *North German Gazette* of a conciliatory nature towards Austria, evidently intended to close the unhappy polemic which had been carrying on in the Press of both countries. This was followed by a lull, but friction recommenced at the end of March, in consequence of reports in the Press of a projected alliance between Austria and Italy, which was supposed to be mainly directed against Prussia, and which led to strong animadversion in the Prussian Press against Austria.

Fortunately it caused no evil results, and with time and patience this regrettable action of the Press, equally pernicious to both parties, ceased.

The Prince and Princess of Wales arrived at Berlin on the 16th of January, 1869, and were received at the station by the Crown Prince and Princess, Her Majesty's Embassy, and the Court and military authorities, and proceeded to the palace of the Crown Prince, where they received, shortly after their arrival, the visit of their Prussian Majesties.

On the day after his arrival a Chapter of the Knights of the Black Eagle was held by the King for the purpose of investing the Prince of Wales with the collar and mantle of that order, of which His Royal Highness had been a knight for some years. By the rules of the order the collar and mantle can only be received in the capital of the country. The King addressed a short speech to His Royal Highness, referring at the close of it in affectionate and touching terms to the interesting fact that the collar then presented to His Royal Highness was the same one worn by His Royal Highness the Prince Consort.

After the ceremony a banquet was given by the King to the Prince and Princess, at which the members of the Royal Family were present, and to which Lady Augustus and I were invited, which was followed by a gala representation of the ballet of *Sardanapalus*, given at the Opera House.

At the banquet Field-Marshal Wrangel and Count

Bismarck wore the Order of Dannebrog, by command of the King, in compliment to the Princess of Wales.

On the following day a ball was given by their Majesties in honour of the Prince and Princess of Wales, and every attention was paid by their Majesties to their comfort and amusement; and both the King and Queen expressed to me the gratification afforded to them by their Royal Highnesses' visit.

On the following day their Royal Highnesses dined with the Crown Prince and Princess, on which occasion their Majesties were present, and we had the honour of being invited. Previous to their departure for Vienna the Prince and Princess were present at the opera.

The Prince of Montenegro arrived at Berlin on the 10th of February, on his return from St. Petersburg. His Highness was accompanied by Prince Dolgorouki, an aide-de-camp of the Emperor of Russia, who was to represent His Imperial Majesty at the christening of the daughter of the Prince of Montenegro at Cettinge.

The Prince was received by the King as a "stranger of distinction," and was not presented or accompanied by the Turkish Minister at the Court of Berlin. He was present at a ball at the palace, and dined with their Majesties, when Aristarchi Bey, the Turkish Minister, was invited in his honour. The Prince made a good impression on their Majesties, and those with whom he became acquainted, by his intelligence and refined manners. He called on the Turkish Minister, on Count Benedetti, and on me. His language as regarded the Porte was very conciliatory and correct.

During his stay at Berlin the Prince of Montenegro asked for the support of Prussia to obtain for him the cession of a seaport by Turkey. He mentioned the subject also to the Turkish Minister, who wisely advised him to make the appeal direct to the Sultan, and not through another channel.

The request, if strictly confined to commercial purposes, and not with a view to a naval station or war port, was a very legitimate one, for the Principality of Montenegro being a rocky and barren tract, and having then no outlet to the sea, the inhabitants had no means of exportation or importation, and were consequently deprived of all trade, and even exposed, when their crops failed, to the danger of starvation. They have since acquired a seaport by the Treaty of Berlin.

The King of Prussia proceeded in June to open the new naval harbour of Jahde. This harbour will become a Prussian naval port of great importance. Of large dimensions, it is capable of holding a large fleet. When the canal from the Baltic to the North Sea is finished, it will enable the German fleet to assemble in all seasons at Jahde, whether from the Baltic or from foreign stations, in case the Sound may be frozen.

Her Majesty's Government sent the *Minotaur* to Jahde on this occasion, to greet the King of Prussia in Her Majesty's name. When a Continental Sovereign approaches a neighbouring Sovereign's frontier, it has been customary for the latter to send a special representative to compliment the former. England happily has no land frontiers. The sea is our boundary and our

clement, and, in view of the family relations between the two Courts, this exceptional occasion was profited of to render a mark of honour and respect to his Prussian Majesty, by whom it was duly appreciated. His Majesty wrote to the Queen, as Lord Clarendon informed me, one of "the prettiest letters he had ever read."

Count Bismarck also wrote a very gratifying and friendly despatch to Count Bernstorff, for communication to Lord Clarendon, on the visit of the *Minotaur*, and on the good-feeling which this mark of attention on the part of England had created throughout the North German Confederation.

I was charged by Lord Clarendon to assure Count Bismarck how much gratified the Queen and Her Majesty's Government had been by the King's expressions of satisfaction at the presence of the *Minotaur*.

During the course of 1869 several small clouds arose to darken the political horizon, and tended to keep alive that want of confidence in the maintenance of peace so pernicious to the revival of industry and trade. I will only cursorily refer to them, without entering into their details.

Differences arose between France and Belgium on account of the opposition raised by the latter to the sale of the Luxembourg Railway to a French company traversing a portion of Belgium. Instead of this question being treated from the commencement as being one of a purely commercial character, it assumed a political importance, menacing to the independence

of Belgium. After long negotiations, in which, unfortunately, a strong political animus was intermingled, and after weary delays, in which much ink was consumed, a satisfactory arrangement was concluded, to which happy result Lord Clarendon, with his conciliatory disposition, largely contributed.

During these negotiations the Prussian Government kept strictly aloof, without taking any part or expressing any opinion which could give offence to either of the litigants. Count Bismarck acted throughout with great tact and judgment in refraining, by his total silence, from arousing in the smallest degree the susceptibilities of France. The Emperor Napoleon, knowing the deep interest taken by the British nation in the independence and welfare of Belgium, was also anxious to avoid any action which could weaken the friendly relations existing between England and France.

The Viceroy of Egypt arrived at Berlin on the 7th of June. General von Loen and Count Fürstenstein, a chamberlain of the Court, were appointed to receive His Highness at the frontier, and a special train was placed at his disposal from thence to Berlin. He, with his suite, were lodged at the royal palace. A State banquet was given in his honour by the King, besides two representations at the opera. A dinner was likewise given to him by the Crown Prince and Princess at Potsdam.

The Turkish Minister was also instructed to receive him at the railway, and to place himself at his disposal.

The Viceroy did not occupy himself with politics

during his stay at Berlin. I imagine that he confided those matters to Nubar Pacha, with whom I had some conversation. The object of the Viceroy appeared to be to take up a prominent position in Europe, and to assume the character of an independent Sovereign. Nubar Pacha referred in conversation to the question of the capitulations. I observed to him that, in my opinion, if any relaxation was granted by Europe, it should only be in the way of an experiment, and the concessions granted should be confined in their action to Alexandria and Cairo, where there is a large European population, and not be applicable to the whole of Egypt; also that what might be advisable for Cairo would not be practicable for the distant provinces—for instance, the Soudan. On the other hand, the Viceroy must give guarantees for the due administration of justice, and these guarantees could not be carried out in the outlying provinces of Egypt.

I advised Nubar Pacha to avoid causing any disturbances with the Porte, observing that there were sores enough in Europe without having an additional “Egyptian plague.”

In July Count Bismarck retired from the Presidency of the Council, retaining the offices of Minister for Foreign Affairs and Chancellor of the North German Confederation. The primary motive was the state of his health, for the restoration of which the King had granted him leave of absence to repair to his country seat. His mind had been overstrained by the burthen of the many duties he had to fulfil, and his

nervous system had been agitated by the opposition he had encountered in the Prussian Legislative Chamber. He decided, therefore, to confine his labours to the affairs of the North German Confederation, leaving to Herr von der Heydt, his successor in the Prussian Ministry, and to his colleagues, the responsibilities of the Prussian Administration, and of submitting to the Prussian Parliament the financial measures necessary to cover the deficit in the Prussian Exchequer.

We dined with the King and Queen at Babelsberg on the 6th of July, as did also the French Ambassador and Countess Benedetti. The King appeared in excellent health and spirits, and both His Majesty and the Queen were very gracious to the Benedettis, and the relations with France were very friendly.

I had a long conversation with the King after dinner. His Majesty was extremely pleased with the *Minotaur*, and said that it was the finest ship he had ever seen. After observing to the King that happily the political horizon was free from clouds, I took the opportunity to observe that there appeared to be only one danger to the peace, which was the large armaments maintained in Europe, and I quoted to His Majesty an extract from Lord Clarendon's letter bearing on this subject. I said that they were not only a heavy charge on the finances, but that they deprived the countries of so much reproductive labour. The King was very amiable and gracious, although the subject was not in harmony with his ideas. He

acknowledged, however, the truth of my observation, but did not see how the conditions could be altered.

I remarked that in October France raised one hundred thousand conscripts, and the North German Confederation a similar number. Why, therefore, should not the two Governments agree to raise only fifty or sixty thousand? Each would still remain on the same level. The King replied that, how ever desirable it might be, it was not possible, for it would derange the whole system of military service in Prussia. I observed that there existed a large number of exemptions from service in Prussia—it would, therefore, only be an increase of these exemptions. The King, however, said that laudable as the suggestion was in theory, it was not practicable.

Of course discretion forbade my continuing a subject which was not genial to His Majesty; nor, indeed, should I have opened on it at all had I not received an instruction from Lord Clarendon to profit of an opportunity to bring the subject under His Majesty's notice. I felt that I had said enough to induce the King's attention to the matter, so left the seed I had sown to bear fruit later.

A change of Ministry in France occupied the attention of the political world. M. Rouher and the Marquis de Lavalette retired from the French Cabinet. These changes were produced by internal, and not by external, causes. The Emperor Napoleon was in a very difficult position. He felt that it was necessary to relax in some degree the attributes of personal

government which he had so long exercised, and to extend the political liberties of the nation in a constitutional form.

Prince La Tour d'Auvergne was appointed to succeed the Marquis de Lavalette as Minister for Foreign Affairs, and no change of foreign policy was expected, except as regarded Papal affairs, the Prince being known to be impregnated with Ultramontane doctrines. I had been on intimate terms with Prince La Tour when he was French Minister at Berlin, and fully appreciated his worth and estimable qualities. The Berlin Press was very prudent and reserved in regard to these changes, not wishing to cause irritation on the part of the French Press. But some alarm was felt for the future, and it was feared that the Emperor, having opened the sluices, might find himself overpowered by the torrent. The concessions granted by the Emperor were more or less wrung from him, and this is always dangerous, for the French nation, like *Oliver Twist*, was certain to ask for more. The Press warfare between Austria and Prussia unfortunately recommenced at this time, in consequence of the restlessness and indiscretion of Count Beust. There were several incidents which gave rise to it; but the culminating one was a speech made by Count Beust to the Austro-Hungarian Delegations, in which he stated that "the treaties between Prussia and the South German States were not in conformity with the Treaty of Prague." This was, no doubt, his opinion; but to hold an opinion is one thing, to express it to

a Parliamentary body like the Delegations is quite another; and, in fact, his utterances amounted to a public accusation against Prussia that she had acted in contravention of the Treaty of Prague.

Early in September I was enabled to inform Lord Clarendon that the polemic between Austria and Prussia had been happily and satisfactorily brought to an end by a verbal exchange of conciliatory communications, and there was every reason to hope that the spirit of conciliation which had been manifested by both parties would place their future relations on a more friendly footing.

Invitations were at this time addressed by the Khedive of Egypt to the King, the Crown Prince and Princess of Prussia, and to Count Bismarck, to attend the ceremony of the opening of the Suez Canal. His Majesty felt obliged to decline the invitation, on account of his age and of the fatigues of the journey. Count Bismarck also excused himself, on the grounds of his official duties. In regard to the invitation to the Crown Prince, the King referred the question to Count Bismarck. The Crown Prince was very anxious to avail himself of the opportunity for visiting the East. The King had some scruples, on account of the great expense which it would entail. Count Bismarck supported the project, and overcame these scruples, representing the good effect which would result, in a political light, from a visit of the Crown Prince *en route* to the Emperor of Austria.

A notification was accordingly sent by telegraph

to Vienna that the Crown Prince would accept the invitation of the Khedive to attend the ceremony of the opening of the Suez Canal, and would visit the Emperor and the Imperial family at Vienna, if it should be agreeable to His Imperial Majesty. A reply was immediately sent by the Emperor stating that it would give him much pleasure to receive the visit of the Crown Prince.

His Royal Highness left Berlin on the 5th of October for Vienna, where he remained two days, and from thence proceeded to Brindisi, where a Prussian flotilla awaited his arrival to escort him on his tour.

The Crown Princess did not accompany his Royal Highness, but went with Princes William and Henry to Italy during His Royal Highness's absence.

It would almost appear that the Crown Prince during his visit at Vienna had inspired the Emperor of Austria with a desire to witness the opening of the Suez Canal and to see the East, for shortly afterwards His Imperial Majesty commenced his journey to Constantinople, Athens, Jerusalem, and finally to Port Saïd, where His Majesty met the Empress Eugénie and the Crown Prince of Prussia, and with them assisted at the inauguration.

The Crown Prince visited the King and Queen of the Hellenes at Athens; from thence he went to Constantinople. His Royal Highness then visited the coasts of Asia Minor and Syria, Jerusalem and the Holy Land, and made arrangements to arrive at Suez for the inauguration of the canal.

He was attended by General von Stosch and his military staff.

At a private audience of His Majesty, on my return from England, the King referred with evident satisfaction to the gratifying reception which the Crown Prince had met with in the East, and to the good impression which His Royal Highness's visit had produced. His Majesty also expressed much gratification at the gift by the Sultan of a site for a Protestant church at Jerusalem.

The King then turned to the state of Europe, and observed that happily there existed a general calm, and a good understanding among all the Powers. He expressed in warm terms his admiration of the speech of the Emperor Napoleon on opening the Legislative Assembly, observing that the Emperor had resumed his former energy. He expressed his confidence in the pacific policy of the Emperor and his Government, and his own desire for the maintenance of good relations between the two countries.

His Majesty spoke of the approaching Œcumenical Council at Rome, and said that he had learnt with much satisfaction that the dogma of the Infallibility of the Pope had been abandoned. In referring to the decision taken by the German bishops at Fulda, which had been chiefly instrumental in restraining the ardour of the ultra-Jesuit party at Rome, the King observed that he had conversed during the summer with several of the Roman Catholic archbishops and bishops of Northern Germany, and he was happy to find them

men of enlightened as well as moderate views, and well disposed to his Government.

On the 10th of December General von Nostitz arrived from St. Petersburg, specially charged by the Emperor of Russia to deliver the insignia of the Grand Cross of the Order of St. George to the King of Prussia. His Majesty had already received the Commandership of St. George from the Emperor Alexander, for the engagement in which he had taken part at Arcis-sur-Aube in 1814.

The St. George is the most distinguished military Order in Europe. The Grand Cross can only be conferred on the officer in command of an army gaining a decisive battle, and I believe that the last recipient of it had been the late Duke of Wellington (I am not, however, certain whether Field-Marshal Diebitch or Paskievitch had received it). When the King of Prussia received the Order, he was the only possessor of a Grand Cross of St. George. This distinction gave great pleasure to the King. He gave a State banquet to General von Nostitz, to which the Russian Minister, M. d'Oubril, and all the members of the Legation were invited. The King reciprocated this distinguished favour on the part of the Emperor of Russia by conferring on His Imperial Majesty the Order of Merit, which is the highest military distinction in Prussia.

General Sir William Codrington, accompanied by Lieut.-Colonel Lennox, R.E., and Captain Hall, R.A., officially attended the Prussian autumnal reviews in Pomerania. I gave a dinner, to which I invited Field-

Marshal Wrangel, General von Roon, the Minister for War, and other naval and military men of note, to meet General Sir W. Codrington and the other English officers who had attended the reviews.

I was instructed by Lord Clarendon, by command of the Queen, to take an opportunity to inform the King of Prussia how much Her Majesty had been gratified by the kind and friendly reception given to the British officers who had attended the Prussian manœuvres. I had consequently an audience of His Majesty to deliver the Queen's message. The King desired me to convey to Her Majesty his sincere acknowledgment for her flattering message, and said that it had afforded him very great pleasure to receive so many distinguished officers of the British army. He spoke in high terms of General Sir William Codrington, adding that he had derived great satisfaction from personal acquaintance with him.

Thus the year 1869, with all its fears and doubts, with all its variations and surprises, passed peacefully away, and there was a perfect calm in Europe.

CHAPTER XI.

Visit of Archduke Carl Louis to Berlin—Change of Ministry in France—Appointment of Ollivier as Premier—Œcumenical Council at Rome—Proposal of Prince Hohenlohe to European Powers for Common Action—Its Failure—Ministerial Crisis in Bavaria—Appointment of Count Bray as Premier—Ball at British Embassy to their Prussian Majesties—Death of Countess Blücher and General Grey—Murder of Messrs. Vyner and Herbert by Brigands in Greece—Death of the Earl of Clarendon—Appointment of Earl Granville as his Successor—Resignation of Count Daru—Duke of Gramont appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs—Departure of King for Ems—Crown Prince greets the Emperor of Russia at Breslau, and receives the Order of St. George—Acceptance of Crown of Spain by Hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern—Great Irritation at Paris—Mission of Count Benedetti to Ems—Failure of Negotiations—Renunciation by Prince of Hohenzollern—Further Demands of France rejected—Count Bismarck's Return to Berlin—Last Attempt of Earl Granville to avert War—Interview with Count Bismarck—Interview with Prince Gortschakoff—Conversation with Count Bismarck—Enthusiastic Reception of the King on his Return to Berlin—Council of Ministers and Generals—Decree for Mobilisation of the Federal Army.

THE year 1870, so eventful before its close, bade fair to commence in a perfect calm. There was no political question in Europe under discussion. Every country was solely occupied with its own internal affairs, and there was nothing which predicted a rupture of the peace. The relations between Germany and France were friendly; there was a frequent interchange of courtesies between the Sovereigns, and there was every appearance of amity between the two nations.

The visit of the Archduke Carl Louis to Berlin brought about a complete restoration of amicable

relations between the Austrian and Prussian Governments, and put an end to the bitter warfare which had been carried on for some time past by the Press of the respective countries.

The change of Ministry in France at the beginning of 1870 was the first startling event which stirred the calm of Europe. The retirement in the previous July of M. Rouher, the President of the Ministry, and of the Marquis de Lavalette, Minister for Foreign Affairs—both strong advocates of a peace policy—had occasioned some surprise. The former was known to be a personal friend of the Emperor, and devoted to His Majesty. The Marquis de Lavalette equally enjoyed the favour of the Emperor, and during his short tenure of office as Minister for Foreign Affairs had acquired the good opinion and confidence of Europe. But the French Emperor, it appears, had deemed it necessary, in the interests of his dynasty and in those of his people, to relax in some degree the personal government which he had hitherto exercised, and to loosen the reins in regard to Constitutional Government, which till now he had so firmly held. For this purpose it was necessary to give a larger scope to Parliamentary Government, and by the selection of a popular leader as Minister to gain strength and support for the Crown. On January 2nd, 1870, M. Ollivier, who was a political leader of the Liberal party in the Legislative Chamber, was chosen by the Emperor as head of a new Ministry, and Count Daru was appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The change of Ministry in France was received generally at Berlin with satisfaction, and confidence was felt that the policy of the new Government would be in accordance with the pacific disposition evinced during the late elections by the French nation.

M. Ollivier was looked upon as engaged, by his antecedents, to pursue a policy of non-intervention, and the opinions he had at various times expressed of a desire to maintain friendly relations between France and Prussia confirmed these hopeful expectations.

Nothing was known of Count Daru, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, further than that he was regarded as a highly honourable and independent man, and that he had experience and age to inspire confidence in his good sense and judgment.

Some fear was entertained that his intimacy with M. Thiers might influence his disposition towards Prussia; but even this fear was more than counter-balanced by confidence in the friendly disposition of the Emperor Napoleon and in the pacific policy of his Ministry.

The meeting of the Œcumenical Council at Rome, which took place at the end of 1868, and the decisions which it would take, both on religious and political questions, occupied the attention of the German public and Press.

A meeting of the German Roman Catholic bishops had taken place at Fulda to discuss the various questions to be submitted to the Œcumenical Council, and amongst them the dogma of the Infallibility of the

Pope. To this dogma the German bishops were strongly opposed.

A proposal was made by Prince Hohenlohe, Prime Minister of Bavaria and brother of the Cardinal, to Prince Bismarck and the other European Governments for a common understanding as to the course to be taken with regard to the decisions of the Œcumenical Council. Baron Thile informed me that Prince Bismarck had declined to adopt the suggestion of Prince Hohenlohe—to submit certain questions relating to the position of the Church and State to the Prussian Universities for their opinion. The Prussian Government considered that taking such a course would render the Universities arbitrators on a question on which the Government alone should decide. They had, however, informed Prince Hohenlohe that they should be happy to learn the opinions of the Bavarian Universities, to whom these questions had been submitted.

Baron Thile informed me that the Prussian Government had taken no further steps in this matter, and were awaiting a communication from Prince Hohenlohe, who had expressed his intention, at an opportune moment, of submitting definitive proposals to the several European Governments as to the course which should be adopted.

The German and Austrian Roman Catholic bishops acted harmoniously together, and were in unison with the bishops of France and the United States of America. Nevertheless, they were in a minority of one to three as compared with the Ultramontane party.

The Prussian Government scrupulously avoided any interference whatever in the proceedings of the Council, and Baron Arnim, the Prussian Minister at Rome, was instructed to maintain a strictly passive attitude. The proposal of the French Government to accredit an ambassador to the Œcumenical Council was rejected by the Papal Government.

In consequence of the proposals made by Prince Hohenlohe in regard to the Œcumenical Council, he incurred the displeasure of the Ultramontane party at Munich, and more especially in the country districts, where it was all-powerful. This party exercised great influence in the Lower Chamber, and it availed itself of the first opportunity to place him in a minority. The King had scruples in parting with his Minister, who was the ablest statesman in Bavaria, and who had given proofs of his patriotism and of his devotion to his Sovereign. During the crisis there was great agitation at Munich, which was partly caused by the impression that the King was disinclined to part with his Minister. A popular commotion was feared, and probably would have gravely compromised the position of the King, whose eccentricities had greatly diminished his popularity. Happily Prince Hohenlohe resigned, and thus all danger of a disturbance ceased. Count Bray was appointed his successor, and this appointment was received with general satisfaction.

Since those days Prince Hohenlohe has had a distinguished career. In 1871 one of the first acts of the newly-constituted German Reichstag was to elect

him its Vice-President. Three years later he succeeded Count Harry Arnim as German Ambassador to France, and in 1878 was one of the German plenipotentiaries at the Congress of Berlin. After the death of Field-Marshal Monteuffel in 1880, he was appointed Governor-General of Alsace-Lorraine, which post he has filled with great distinction, and still continues to hold.

We gave a ball on the 3rd of March to the King and Queen, which went off very successfully. Both their Majesties remained for supper, and His Majesty did justice to it, telling me the following day that he had never slept better. The only *contretemps* was the absence of the Crown Princess, who was slightly indisposed.

In April, 1870, we were deeply grieved by the death of Countess Blücher, who had been our dear and valued friend for many years, and for whom we had the greatest affection. Her loss was also deeply regretted by Her Majesty Queen Victoria, the Crown Princess of Prussia, and our Royal Family, to whom she was most devoted, and from whom she had received signal marks of esteem and regard. I have rarely met anyone possessed of a kinder heart, or one endowed with more tact and judgment, more universally appreciated.

I was also much distressed by the death of General and the Hon. C. Grey, Keeper of the Privy Seal and private secretary to Her Majesty the Queen. He had been a faithful and devoted servant to Her Majesty, and his loss was severely felt. I shall always gratefully remember his kindness to me on many occasions.

On the 20th of April intelligence was received from Greece of the capture near Marathon of Lord and Lady Muncaster, Miss L'Estrange, Mr. F. Vyner, Mr. Lloyd, and Mr. Herbert, a secretary of Her Majesty's Legation at Athens, by a band of brigands. The ladies were released, and afterwards Lord Muncaster was set at liberty to raise the sum of £2,000, which was the ransom demanded.

To save the lives of those remaining in captivity and to obtain their release it was of essential importance that no military measures should be taken, and General Soutzo, the Minister of War, gave a solemn promise to our Minister at Athens that the brigands should not be attacked if, on payment of the sum demanded, they should release their captives. The King behaved nobly—giving power to his Minister to pay any sum that might be required—and said that he would rather take the place of the captives than that their lives should be exposed. The promise of the Minister of War was not fulfilled. Troops were sent against the brigands, and on their approach the brigands murdered Mr. Vyner, and carried off Mr. Herbert and Mr. Lloyd to the mountains, where they were also killed. This fearful tragedy produced a thrill of horror and indignation through Europe. Ten of the brigands were killed by the troops, but the chief and some others escaped. Those who were taken prisoners were hanged at Athens.

Mr. Herbert had served under me at the Legation at Vienna in 1859, it having been his first diplomatic

post; he was a young man of promising ability, and very much liked. He was intimate with Lord Edward St. Maur, also attached to my Legation; and it is somewhat remarkable that both these promising young men should have met with a tragic end.

There reigned at this time in Europe a perfect calm; there was not a cloud in the political sky, and the maintenance of peace appeared to be assured for many years. There was not a question of any serious difference among the Powers of Europe—all was peace and harmony. Even the question of a disarmament to relieve the burthen of general taxation had been mooted by Lord Clarendon, thus giving evidence of his belief in the maintenance of peace; and it is possible that, if he had been spared to his country, his influence with the Emperor Napoleon might have averted the coming war. But Providence ordained otherwise. At this serious crisis this able, prudent, far-seeing Minister was removed from his useful sphere of action to his eternal home. He had been long suffering from an attack of gout which had much weakened him, but he continued to transact business as usual. He wrote to me on the 22nd of June, and did not refer to his illness. Dysentery set in suddenly, which, in his weakened condition, he was unable to resist. He passed peacefully away on the 27th of June, to the inexpressible grief of his family and friends, and to the deep concern of his Sovereign and the nation.

Lord Clarendon was a statesman of remarkable character and ability. He had filled the highest offices

of State with dignity and equal success. He was highly accomplished and intellectual; he was gifted with consummate tact and judgment, and in all his actions was governed by the highest principles of justice and honour. He was a true and steadfast friend, ever ready to do a kind action. In treating foreign questions, his sagacity and knowledge were very remarkable, and never wanting; his courtesy, his gentleness, his cheerfulness under all circumstances, and his kind-heartedness, added to his charm of manner, won the affection and admiration of all who knew him.

His great success was achieved in the post he so ably filled—under several Ministries—as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, where his genial and conciliatory disposition softened many asperities, and gained for him the confidence and esteem of foreign monarchs and statesmen. He was eminently a friend of peace, and on many occasions dexterously and harmoniously settled differences which otherwise might have become serious. He had been a laborious worker all his life, and in the evening of his days, when ease and pleasure would have been more genial to him, he still continued his labours to the last, being actuated by no other feeling than that of patriotism to his country and duty to his Queen.

To me personally his loss was irreparable. He had always been a kind friend and protector to me, and a guide in any difficult circumstances in which I may have been placed; and I felt it a pleasure to serve him with all the zeal and fidelity in my power, of which his

many letters to me prove his recognition and appreciation. But Death strikes all alike, friends or foes ; in the words of the classical poet—

Pallida mors aequo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas,
Regumque turres.*

But the loss of sincere friends is not the less sorrowful, and leaves gaps in our daily life difficult to replace. This is touchingly recorded in the following lines of Montgomery :—

Friend after friend departs.
Who has not lost a friend ?
There is no union here of hearts
That finds not here an end.

Earl Granville was appointed to succeed the Earl of Clarendon as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He had previously filled that post with distinction, and his appointment gave general satisfaction. On his entering on his duties he was greeted by Mr. Hammond (afterwards Lord Hammond, then permanent Under-Secretary of State, of well-known and high reputation) with congratulations on the perfect calm which existed in foreign affairs. His expression was, I believe, “ The political sky is serene—without a cloud.” Within a fortnight the vast armies of France and Germany were marching to deadly combat !

A change had occurred in the Ministry of France. Count Daru had resigned, and the Duke of Gramont was appointed in his place as Minister for Foreign

* Horace, Odes, i., 4, 12.

Affairs. It was an unfortunate selection, as he was known to be thoroughly Austrian and anti-Prussian in his political feeling. I was so astonished when Count Benedetti announced to me the change, that I exclaimed "*Mais pourquoi pas Jules Favre?*" Had the latter been appointed, he would never have assented to the war.

I had personally known the Duke of Gramont for many years, and he was French Minister when I was Secretary to the Legation at Stuttgart; but although a thorough gentleman, and a most agreeable member of society, I never considered him of the calibre to fill the post of Minister for Foreign Affairs. He was too apt to believe what he wished, and he was under the delusion that Austria and Southern Germany would be the allies of France in a war against Prussia. Subsequent events proved how illusory his expectations had been. The war, which he in great part brought about, was the means of uniting the whole of Germany under Prussia for the defence of the Fatherland.

The King of Prussia left Berlin for Ems on the 19th of June to take the waters there, where he met the Emperor of Russia; there was, however, no political motive for the meeting, the Emperor having passed two days with the King at Berlin on his passage. Everyone was leaving Berlin. Count Bismarck was at Varzin. The various Ministers were *en congé*, and most of the Foreign Ministers dispersed. No one had the slightest presage of the coming storm.

The Crown Prince, having been absent at Carlsbad

during the late visit to Berlin of the Emperor of Russia, and consequently unable to meet His Imperial Majesty, repaired to Breslau to greet the Emperor on his passage through that city to Warsaw. His Royal Highness received His Majesty on his arrival at the station, wearing the uniform of colonel *en chef* of a Russian regiment of hussars.

During the breakfast, which had been prepared for His Imperial Majesty at the station, the Emperor affixed the Star of the Second Class of St. George on the breast of the Crown Prince; and before leaving addressed a telegram in the following words to Prince Frederick Charles :—

I have obtained the permission of His Majesty the King to confer on you, as well as on Fritz, the Second Class of my Order of St. George for your brilliant conduct.

(Signed) ALEXANDER.

I have now to enter on the events preceding the war between France and Germany. They were of momentous import, though of short duration, and the seat of these events was principally at Ems, where the King was then residing, and whither Count Benedetti, the French Ambassador, had been instructed by his Government to repair.

I was at the time confined to the house by a severe attack of bronchitis, and I therefore instructed Mr. Petre, Her Majesty's secretary of Embassy, on the 6th of July, to call on Baron Thile, and to inquire from him whether he could give me any information on

the subject of the reported offer of the crown of Spain to the Hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern.

Baron Thile informed Mr. Petre that the French Chargé d'Affaires, M. Le Sourd, had called upon him a few days previously, and stated that the intelligence which had reached the French Government of a deputation having been sent from Madrid to offer the crown of Spain to the Prince of Hohenzollern, and of the offer having been accepted, had produced an unfavourable impression at Paris, and that the Imperial Government wished to know what course the Prussian Government intended to pursue with reference to this question. (*Quelle était l'attitude du Gouvernement Prussien?*)

Herr von Thile replied to the French Chargé d'Affaires that the selection of a Sovereign to fill the throne of Spain was a question with which the Prussian Government had no concern whatever—(*C'était une question qui n'existait pas pour le Gouvernement Prussien*)—and that consequently he was not in a position to give any explanations upon the subject to the French Chargé d'Affaires. The Prussian Government considered that the statesmen and people of Spain were entitled to offer the crown to anyone whom they might think fit, and that it concerned alone the person to whom the offer was made to accept it or not. Herr von Thile assured Mr. Petre that this was all that had passed on the subject between M. Le Sourd and himself.

On the following day, being somewhat better, I

called on Baron Thile, when His Excellency repeated to me what he had stated on the previous day to Mr. Petre, and said that he had received no fresh information on the subject.

He added, however, that the Spanish Minister had called upon him that day, and showed him a telegram he had received *en clair* from his Government, stating that a meeting of the Cabinet had taken place at La Granja in the presence of the Regent, and that the acceptance of the Prince of Hohenzollern as the future King of Spain had been unanimously agreed to.

The telegram further stated that the Cortes would assemble on the 22nd of July, and that on the 1st of August the vote would be taken.

Baron Thile remarked on the agitation produced at Paris by the acceptance of the crown of Spain by the Prince of Hohenzollern, and on the menacing tone assumed by the Duke of Gramont in his speech to the Chamber. He added that the Prussian Government would maintain an attitude of perfect silence and abstention.

Some of the Liberal Press replied to the violent articles of the French Press in a severe tone, but not in any way offensive to the French nation. The articles of the official Press were rather argumentative than vituperative, and expressed more of surprise than of anger at the extreme irritation evinced at Paris against Prussia.

Count Bismarck returned to Berlin on the 12th of July, and received the intelligence of the spontaneous

renunciation of the crown of Spain by the hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern.

It appeared that M. Olozaga, Spanish Ambassador at Paris, had been charged to inform the Duke of Gramont that Prince Leopold had spontaneously renounced his candidature to the crown of Spain. In consequence of this favourable termination of the crisis Count Bismarck abandoned his intended departure for Ems, and was to return to Varzin on the following day.

I wrote to Lord Granville on the 9th of July that while deploring the loss of my late chief, to whom I was sincerely attached, it was some consolation to me that he had accepted the seals of the Foreign Department, and that his appointment had been received with general satisfaction. The moment, however, was a very critical one. The Spanish affair was very serious, and the irritation at Paris against Prussia was so great that I despaired of reason gaining the upper hand. I was firmly convinced that neither the King nor Count Bismarck had initiated the election of Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern, the originator of the idea to General Prim being reported to have been Marshal Saldanha. That the project must have been known to the King and Count Bismarck in 1869 is probable, for no member of his family would have accepted a foreign crown without intimating the fact to His Majesty; nor, indeed, could any officer in the Prussian army—as was the case with Prince Leopold—have done so without the knowledge of the King. The German monarch declined all responsibility in the matter, and left Prince

Leopold to take his own course. That Prince, as soon as he realised the complications his candidature had evoked, hastened to withdraw it. He requested his father to be the medium of communication to that effect; and on July 12th the Spanish Ambassador in Paris announced officially to the French Government that Prince Leopold had signified his renunciation of all pretensions to the throne of Spain.

I happen to know that Prince Anton of Hohenzollern applied to Count Bismarck for a cypher to enable him to communicate with General Prim. This cypher was lost in its transmission, and it may have fallen into French hands.

In my last letter to Lord Clarendon of the 18th of June I had mentioned that during the residence of the Emperor of Russia at Ems there was congregated a swarm of Secret Police agents, and the official authorities asked for a French *chef de police* to be in communication with the Prussian Director of Police. The two latter came, of course, much into contact. The Frenchman was questioned as to the state of France and of public opinion. He said that the plebiscite had not produced all the effect which had been hoped for, and that there was a good deal of agitation and discontent; and he added that he should not care so much if this discontent existed only in the democratic circles, but, unfortunately, it existed in the army, and was spreading. On being asked what was the reason, he replied that the French army were only now being made use of as policemen, and that they were tired of this duty. If this

continues, he added, some remedy must be found; and on being questioned as to the nature of the remedy, he replied, "Oh, of course, a war against Germany." I may further observe that, on the first announcement of the candidature of Prince Leopold for the crown of Spain, General Fleury, French Ambassador at St. Petersburg, who was likely to be initiated in the secret policy of his Government, at once said to Prince Gortschakoff, "*C'est la guerre*"; from which I concluded that the Emperor and his Government were decided for war, and that they considered this was a favourable opportunity for engaging in it before the complete unification of Germany. On the 13th of July I addressed the following Despatch to Lord Granville:—

I had an interview with Count Bismarck to-day, and congratulated him on the apparent solution of the crisis by the spontaneous renunciation of the crown of Spain by the Hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern. He appeared, however, somewhat doubtful as to whether this solution would prove a settlement of the differences with France. He said that the extreme moderation evinced by the King of Prussia under the menacing tone of the French Government, and the courteous reception by His Majesty of Count Benedetti at Ems after the severe language held to Prussia, both officially and in the French Press, was producing throughout Prussia general indignation. He had that morning received telegrams from Bremen, Königsberg, and other places, expressing strong disapproval of the conciliatory course pursued by the King of Prussia at Ems, and requiring that the honour of the country should not be sacrificed.

Count Bismarck then observed that intelligence had been received from Paris—(though not officially from the Prussian Embassy)—that the solution of the Spanish difficulty would not suffice to content the French Government, and that other

demands would be advanced. "If such be the case," said Count Bismarck, "it was evident that the succession to the Spanish crown was but a mere pretext, and that the real object of France was to seek a revenge for Königgrätz." The feeling of the German nation was that they were fully equal to cope with France, and they were equally as confident as the French might be of military success. The feeling, therefore, in Prussia and in Germany was that they should accept no humiliation or insult from France, and that if unjustly provoked they should accept the combat.

"But," said His Excellency, "we do not wish for war, and we have proved, and we shall continue to prove, our peaceful disposition. At the same time we cannot allow the French to have the start of us as regards armaments.

"I have positive information that military preparations have been and are being made in France for war. Large stores of munitions are being concentrated. Large purchases of hay and other war material are being made, and horses are being bought. If these preparations continue, we shall be obliged to ask the French Government for explanations as to their object and meaning. After what has occurred, we must require some guarantee that we may not be subjected to a sudden attack, like a flash of lightning in perfect darkness, which suddenly reveals to sight a band of robbers. We must know that, this Spanish difficulty once removed, there are no other lurking designs which may burst upon us like a thunderstorm."

Count Bismarck stated that unless some assurance, some guarantee was given by France to the European Powers, or in some official form, that the present solution of the Spanish question was a final and satisfactory settlement of the French demands, and that no further claims were to be made—and if, further, a withdrawal or a satisfactory explanation of the menacing language held by the Duke of Gramont was not made, the Prussian Government would be obliged to seek explanations from France.

"It was impossible," added Count Bismarck, "that Prussia

could tamely and quietly sit under the affront offered to the King and to the nation by the menacing language of the French Government.

“I could not,” said His Excellency, “hold communication with the French Ambassador after the language held to Prussia, in the face of Europe, by the French Minister for Foreign Affairs.”

From the foregoing observations of Count Bismarck, your lordship will perceive that unless some timely counsel, some friendly hand, can intervene to appease the irritation between the two Governments, the breach, instead of being closed by the solution of the Spanish difficulty, will become wider.

The only means which could pacify the wounded pride of the German nation and restore confidence in the maintenance of peace would be by a spontaneous declaration of the French Government that the incident of the Spanish difficulty had been satisfactorily adjusted, and, in rendering justice to the moderate and peaceful disposition of the King of Prussia and his Government, that the good relations between the two States were not likely to be again exposed to any disturbing influences.

I confess that, in the present spirit of the French nation, I despair of any such reasonable and conciliatory course being taken. On the other hand, I greatly fear that if no mediatory influences can be brought to bear on the French Government to appease the irritation against Prussia, war will be inevitable.

Prince Gortschakoff arrived at Berlin on the 12th of July, on his way from St. Petersburg to Wildbad. He had a lengthened interview with Count Bismarck. What was the nature of the agreement entered into it is impossible to say, but it is fair to suppose that the neutrality of Russia during the coming war formed a principal object of Count Bismarck's solicitude. Prince Gortschakoff was not a statesman to give, without requiring a *quid pro quo*; and there can be no doubt that

he was guided by the same principle of action which had formed the rule of Count Bismarck's diplomacy—namely, “*Do ut Des.*”

I have reason to believe that on this occasion an agreement was come to that, at the close of the war, Prussia should support a proposal to Europe to relieve Russia of that article of the Treaty of Paris of 1856 which restricted the naval forces of Russia in the Black Sea, and restrained her from constructing military and naval arsenals on the coasts of that sea. This was probably the reciprocity for Russian neutrality during the war with France, and was very inopportunately acted on before the close of the siege of Paris, by a notification to the European Powers that Russia repudiated that article of the Treaty of Paris, and resumed full liberty of action as regarded the Black Sea.

Prince Gortschakoff, on his arrival at Berlin, conveyed to me his regrets that his state of health prevented him from calling on me. I immediately expressed my readiness to wait on him, and he received me the same day, July 13th. I had personally known him for some years. When I was transferred to the Embassy at St. Petersburg in 1871, I was, during eight years, in official communication with him, and I had constant experience of his kindness, his courtesy, and the fascinating charm of his conversation. I shall always retain a grateful recollection of my official relations with His Highness.

Prince Gortschakoff read to me a telegram which he had received from the Emperor of Russia, instructing

him to urge on the King of Prussia the renunciation of the crown of Spain by the Prince of Hohenzollern. This instruction was rendered nugatory by the intelligence received on the 12th of July of the adoption of that course.

Prince Gortschakoff then observed to me that he had learnt since his arrival, and after having seen Count Bismarck, that the Prussian Ministers were dissatisfied at the too great pliability of the King of Prussia towards the French demands, especially after the threatening language held to the Corps Legislatif by the Duke of Gramont; that the prestige of the King might suffer from this circumstance, and especially on the eve of new elections to the Federal and Prussian Parliaments. He considered that some acknowledgment was due to the King by the Great Powers for the wise moderation he had evinced; and it was his opinion, which he had likewise conveyed to Baron Brunnow, that the European Powers, whose "*bons offices*" had been exerted to advise a renunciation of the crown of Spain by the Prince of Hohenzollern, should express their acknowledgment to the King of Prussia for the conciliatory spirit he had shown, which, added Prince Gortschakoff, had saved the peace of Europe.

I asked His Highness whether, if public opinion in Prussia was giving evidence of irritation at the concessions made by the King to France, it would be wise for foreign Governments to express their acknowledgments of the course pursued by the King. Would it not be rather an embarrassment to the King

than a service rendered to His Majesty? His Highness said that this was merely a matter of "*réduction*." The communication could be made as expressing satisfaction at the solution of the question by the spontaneous act of Prince Leopold, and at the same time bearing testimony to the calm, dignified, and wise moderation evinced by the King during this crisis.

In the opinion of Prince Gortschakoff, the course he had suggested would also exercise a moral influence at Paris, as proving the deep interest taken by the Great Powers in the maintenance of peace, and as indicating how grave would be the responsibility of anyone who should wilfully and without sufficient cause endanger it.

In the course of our further conversation Prince Gortschakoff expressed his satisfaction at the excellent relations existing between England and Russia, and added in flattering terms that he felt the same confidence in the friendly and conciliatory disposition of Lord Granville as he had hitherto reposed in Lord Clarendon.

On the 14th of July Count Bismarck called upon me, and requested that I would inform Lord Granville of the circumstances under which Baron Werther, Prussian Ambassador at Paris, had been suddenly called to Berlin, in order that his departure might not be supposed to be a rupture of relations with France, or connected with the impending crisis.

He informed me that he had received a telegram from the King stating that a report had just reached

him from Baron Werther, in which he stated that he had been charged by the Duke of Gramont to submit a proposal to His Majesty as a final arrangement of the differences pending between Prussia and France. The proposal was that the King should write a letter to the Emperor Napoleon expressing his regrets that the incident of the acceptance of the Spanish crown by the Prince of Hohenzollern should have given umbrage to France, and declaring that no member of the Hohenzollern family should now, or at any future time, accept the offer of the Spanish crown.

Count Bismarck stated that the King had expressed his surprise that such a commission should have been accepted by his Ambassador. The King instructed Count Bismarck to act in the matter as he thought best. Count Bismarck telegraphed to Baron Werther instructing him to inform the Duke of Gramont that he had submitted the proposal to Count Bismarck, and was charged, in reply, to state that, as a responsible Minister of the Crown, he (Count Bismarck) could not submit such a proposal to his Sovereign.

Baron Werther was called to Berlin to confer with Count Bismarck, and the affairs of the Embassy were confided to Count Solms.

Count Bismarck referred to the present crisis with great calmness, displaying no irritation against France, but rather his hope and desire that, through the influence and counsels of Her Majesty's Government, the Emperor Napoleon and his Government might be brought to reason, and that the dangers which now

threatened the peace of Europe might be happily averted.

On the 16th of July I received a telegram from Lord Granville referring to the twenty-third protocol of the Treaty of Paris in 1856, and suggesting that both France and Prussia, before proceeding to extremities, should have recourse to the good offices of some friendly Power or Powers.

The telegram contained no instruction to act on this suggestion, and I was under the belief that steps in this sense had been taken through Count Bernstorff, the Prussian Ambassador in London. On making inquiry of Baron Thile, I learnt that no communication of this nature had been received from Count Bernstorff. The question was, however, brought under Count Bismarck's notice by Baron Thile, who stated that, of course, he could give no reply until the proposal was officially made. He observed, however, that it could only be accepted on the condition that certain guarantees were given by France that Prussia should not be again exposed to the recurrence of similar hostile conduct on the part of the French Government.

The condition referred to by Count Bismarck appeared to me to put an end to the feasibility of such a pacific arrangement, for it would never have been agreed to by the French Government. It seemed, therefore, hopeless to attempt any reconciliation between the litigant parties. Still, no official declaration of war had been received at Berlin, nor had diplomatic relations between the two countries been broken off.

There might, therefore, still be a hope that, on reflection, reason would prevail over passion, and that some means might be discovered to prevent the outbreak of hostilities.

Baron Thile read to me a memorandum* drawn up by the aide-de-camp of the King of Prussia at Ems—who had been charged to communicate with the French Ambassador—which recorded that His Majesty had stated to Count Benedetti his assent to the renunciation of the Prince of Hohenzollern, but that His Majesty had refused to accede to the second point submitted to him by the French Ambassador—namely, “to take an engagement that no member of the Hohenzollern family should ever accept the offer of the Spanish crown.”

The King returned to Berlin on the evening of the 15th of July, and was received with great enthusiasm, the city being illuminated at night. At every station His Majesty was vociferously cheered, and especially at Cassel and at Hanover. Addresses poured in from all parts, expressing loyalty to His Majesty, and a readiness to incur any sacrifices for the honour and protection of the country. There never was an occasion since 1813 that the national feeling had been so roused, and when all classes of the population and all political parties of every shade were so determined for war.

On the arrival of the King, a council of Ministers and generals was held at the palace, at which the King presided, and the mobilisation of the whole Federal army was decreed.

* See Appendix.

In conformity with Lord Granville's instructions I addressed an official note on the 17th of July to Count Bismarck, appealing to the twenty-third protocol of the Treaty of Paris in 1856, and suggesting that before proceeding to extremities the Government of the North German Confederation should have recourse to the good offices of some friendly Power or Powers, with a view, if possible, to avert the calamity of war.

Count Bismarck, in reply to my note, said that, although always disposed for peaceful negotiations on an honourable basis for Germany, the initiative of negotiations must be taken by France, as she had taken the initiative of war. Any fresh concession made by Prussia would produce the worst effect in Germany, already deeply wounded and irritated by French menaces.

On the 20th of July Count Bismarck called on me, and informed me that he had "submitted my note of the 17th to the King." After giving me the substance of the answer I should receive that evening, as referred to above, he adverted to the impending war, and observed that "Great Britain should have forbidden France to enter on it. She was in a position to do so, and her interests and those of Europe demanded it of her. He said that if Germany should be victorious, of which he had every confidence, the balance of power would be preserved; but if victory were accorded to France, she would be mistress of Europe. England could prevent this by her action now."

Count Bismarck spoke with great calmness, and

without any irritation. He seemed deeply to regret the war, saying that France alone was responsible for it. "I have never been," said Count Bismarck, "one of those who considered that this struggle with France was inevitable. I have always been in hopes that the susceptibilities of France, produced by the events of 1866, would soften down, and gradually pass away. I considered that on two occasions the greatest tension existed in the relations between Great Britain and France, but were happily removed, and have since been followed by a cordial understanding. I had hoped for similar results as regarded France and Prussia, and I regret that I should have been disappointed in my hopes."

I replied to Prince Bismarck that "Great Britain, whose policy was peace, and whose ardent desire was to maintain a good understanding with all the European Powers, would never consent to engage in a war unless her honour and her interests were at stake. Her Majesty's Government deeply deplored the rupture of friendly relations between two Powers with whom they were on terms of intimate friendship. They had used their best endeavours in behalf of peace, and they sincerely regretted that their counsels had not been attended with success."

Count Bismarck told me that in the month of March he had heard of the project to offer the crown of Spain to the Prince of Hohenzollern—for the first time—I think, from Prince Anton Hohenzollern, when appealed to by him on the subject. Count Bismarck

had replied that, as Minister, he could not entertain the idea, and declined having anything to do with it. "If you treat it," said Count Bismarck to the Prince, "as a family question, you must address yourself to the Minister of the Royal Household, Baron Schleinitz." Prince Anton accordingly did so; and the answer of Baron Schleinitz was that he had looked through the family archives, and he had found that the King had no right either to grant the permission or to refuse it. Prince Hohenzollern, said Count Bismarck, was in the same position as any Prussian subject who wished to emigrate. He had only to take the usual course and cease to be a Prussian subject. The King, therefore, had really nothing to do with the matter. I believe that the King had on two occasions dissuaded him from embarking in this adventure.

Count Bismarck said that he had never thought much on the question, and that he had only spoken once or twice to the King on it. On one occasion the King had observed that perhaps France might take umbrage at it, and he had then observed to His Majesty that a Hohenzollern on the throne of Spain would neither further nor injure the interests of Prussia, adding that he should consider him rather in the light of a Bonapartist than a Hohenzollern.

Secrecy had been imposed on him by Prim, who said that if it were known before the moment came it would give rise to all sorts of intrigue in opposition to it.

He (Count Bismarck) had once inquired of Prince

Anton Hohenzollern how the Emperor Napoleon would view it, when he replied that he could answer for the Emperor, who had been his friend of forty years' standing—whom he had befriended in former years. This, said Count Bismarck, was the whole part he had had in the affair. "If," said he, "the French Government had addressed themselves to us, saying that the candidature was very embarrassing to the Emperor, and asking our good offices to have it annulled, I should have been only too glad to have rendered a service to the Emperor, and to have thus proved our wish to be good neighbours, for I have more interest to be on good terms with France than to care for Spain. But the manner in which the Duke of Gramont brought the affair before the Chamber and Europe is unheard of in the annals of diplomacy."

Count Bismarck said that he was satisfied with the attitude of Southern Germany. "If, as I hope and expect," he added, "we shall win, then we shall make no claims, not even upon Southern Germany; but if France should win, she will exercise the preponderating influence in Europe, and there will be no bearing her."

The French Chargé d'Affaires, M. Le Sourd, delivered on July 19th the official declaration of war, and asked for his passports. He was instructed to notify that French subjects would be under English protection.

Previous to his interview with Baron Thile, he called on me, and read to me a Despatch from the Duke of Gramont, stating that Her Majesty's Government

had agreed to the proposal of the French Government to place French subjects under the protection of England during the war, and he inquired whether he was authorised on my part to notify this to Baron Thile.

I stated to M. Le Sourd that I had received a communication from Lord Granville to the same effect, but that before accepting this charge I must, as a matter of form and courtesy, ascertain from Count Bismarck whether this arrangement would be agreeable to the Prussian Government. I begged of him, therefore, in mentioning this circumstance to Baron Thile, to say that I accepted conditionally on receiving the acquiescence of the Prussian Government.

Count Bismarck immediately assented to the proposal, and the archives of the French Embassy, having been previously sealed with the seals of Her Majesty's Embassy and of the French Embassy, were delivered over to Mr. Dering, second secretary of Her Majesty's Embassy.

On Count Bismarck's visit to me on the 18th of July I mentioned to him—with a view, as I thought, of calling forth his appreciation of the impartial and good intentions of Her Majesty's Government—that the French Government had requested that French subjects should be placed under the protection of Great Britain during the war, and that Her Majesty's Government had consented thereto, reserving to Her Majesty's Government the power to render the same service to Prussian subjects in France. Count Bismarck appeared to be

much disconcerted by this announcement, observing that it would produce a bad impression in Germany. "There is already," he said, "a feeling that Her Majesty's Government have a partial leaning towards France, and this incident will tend to confirm it."

I combated this view, referring to the almost unanimous expression of the Press in England in rendering justice to the calm and moderate course which Prussia had taken during the crisis. I stated that there was a general—I might say an universal—feeling in England that she would refrain from engaging in wars in which her interests were not directly concerned, and that no Government would be supported by the nation unless acting in conformity with this feeling. Our course was, therefore, chalked out—namely, that of strict neutrality; and I was rather surprised that His Excellency did not recognise and appreciate the reserve made to the French Government, as giving a proof of the impartial spirit by which Her Majesty's Government were animated.

Alas! the die was cast. *Allea jacta fuit*. And the ruthless engines of war were let loose to scourge the fairest portion of Europe, and cast a dark shadow on many a peaceful and happy home.

CHAPTER XII.

Feverish Impatience of the Duke of Gramont—Excitement at Paris—Napoleon unable to Resist War Party—Benedetti's Explanations to Correct his Supposed Inertness—His Detailed Account of his Mission to Ems—Refutation of Reported Insult to French Ambassador—War Declared on July 14th—Observation in Regard to Strategy of General Moltke—Prussian Victories—Collapse of French Army at Sedan—Emperor Napoleon Surrenders to the King of Prussia—Meeting of the two Sovereigns—Departure of Napoleon for Wilhelmshöhe—Telegram of the King to Queen Augusta after Meeting Napoleon—Toast given by the King to his Army—Metz Invested by Prince Frederick Charles—Malet sent by Lord Lyons under a Flag of Truce to Count Bismarck—Intense Excitement at Paris—Empress flies to England—Republic Proclaimed—Jules Favre Minister for Foreign Affairs—Adventure of M. Regnier—Subsequent Mission of General Boyer from Metz to Versailles—His Interview with Count Bismarck—Failure of Negotiations—Telegram of Count Bismarck to Marshal Bazaine—Letter of King of Prussia to the Empress—Capitulation of Toul, Strasbourg, and Metz—The Mode adopted for the Payment of the “Solde de Captivité” of French Prisoners of War—Anecdote of Bazaine—Crown Prince and Prince Frederick Charles raised to the Rank of Field-Marschals.

THE mission of the French Ambassador, Count Benedetti, to Ems, to appeal directly to the King of Prussia on the question of the candidature of the Prince of Hohenzollern to the throne of Spain, on the result of which peace or war depended, is an event of such importance as to be deserving of especial notice; and as various erroneous statements were at the time in circulation, calculated to embitter the animosity then existing in Paris against Prussia, I think it right to place before my readers a truthful narrative of what occurred.

It is difficult to explain the cause of the feverish haste and excitement evinced by the Duke of Gramont at this eventful moment, unless it be that he was fully determined for war, and had no wish or intention to avoid it. When he refers to "public opinion being on fire," he appears to have forgotten that it was he himself who had kindled the blaze by his injudicious and provocative declaration to the Corps Législatif.

The Emperor Napoleon was indisposed and suffering bodily pain, and had neither the mental nor bodily energy to resist the importunities of the war party, at the head of which were the Duke of Gramont and Marshal Le Bœuf, with other Court influences around him. With all the haste demanded of Count Benedetti, in order "to gain the start in case of an unsatisfactory reply," what happened? When the start was made, and war declared by the French Government, the army was not ready, and the whole military organisation was chaos and confusion!

It is sad to think that the rashness of the leading statesmen of France cost that country the lives of thousands and tens of thousands of her sons, milliards of her treasure, and two of her provinces!

The Duke of Gramont, in his declaration to the Chamber on the 6th of July, in reference to the negotiations preceding the acceptance of the crown of Spain by the Prince of Hohenzollern, made use of the following phrase, "*Qui nous a été cachée*" (*which has been concealed from us*). This phrase, reflecting apparently

on the inertness of the French Ambassador to Berlin, induced Count Benedetti to correct this false impression by publishing an account of the transaction in which he had acted a part, from the time when the idea of offering the crown of Spain to the Prince of Hohenzollern first originated, of which the following is a summary.*

On the 27th of March, 1869, Count Benedetti reports the arrival at Berlin, on a visit, of Señor Rauces y Villa Nueva, Marquis of Casa Lyglesia (latterly Spanish Ambassador in London), then accredited to the Court of Vienna.

Señor Rauces had been a *persona grata* at the Prussian Court at Berlin, and was very popular in society. He had been selected by the Provisional Government in Spain after the revolution to represent the Spanish Government at Berlin. But, however agreeable his nomination would have been to the Court, it was thought that it would have been scarcely decorous for him to present to the King credentials from a Revolutionary Government after he had so recently presented those from Queen Isabella. He was accordingly appointed to Vienna. His visit to Berlin was, therefore, considered as intended to pay his respects to the Court at Berlin on the opening of a new year, and to see his numerous Berlin friends. But there was evidently something more behind it than the mere object of evincing respect and friendship.

In cases of a mysterious nature it has been said,

* See "Ma Mission en Prusse," by Count Benedetti.

“*Cherchez la femme*,” but in this case no female attractions were at issue. It was rather “*Cherchez le candidat pour le trône d’Espagne*.” The visit was at the time said to refer to the possible candidature of the Prince of Hohenzollern for the crown of Spain, and to ascertain the views of the King and Count Bismarck in regard to it. I must observe that at the time there was no Spanish representative at Berlin, none having been appointed since the recall of Señor Tenorio.

In the spring of 1869 Count Benedetti was instructed from Paris to unravel and solve this mystery, and, in the absence of Count Bismarck, he interrogated Baron Thile on the subject. Baron Thile gave him the most positive assurance that to his knowledge there was nothing to authorise the conjecture attached to Señor Rauces’ visit, and that during the stay at Berlin of that diplomatist no allusion had been made to the supposed candidature of the Prince of Hohenzollern. The Cortes, Señor Rauces had said, would elect King Ferdinand, who would decline, and the choice would then be between the Duke de Montpensier and the Duke d’Aosta. Baron Thile said there never had been, or could be, a question of the Prince of Hohenzollern’s candidature.

Baron Thile was very truthful and thoroughly honest, but he was not always informed as to the secret designs of Count Bismarck.

Count Benedetti then went to Paris. On reporting fully to the Emperor on this subject, His Majesty observed “that the candidature of the Duke de

Montpensier would be anti-dynastic, affecting him alone. That of the Prince of Hohenzollern would be anti-national, and the nation would not tolerate it."

In a subsequent conversation which Count Benedetti had with Count Bismarck, the latter observed that "the sovereignty which might be offered to the Prince of Hohenzollern would be ephemeral, and full of danger. With this conviction, the King would certainly advise the non-acquiescence of the Prince in the vote of the Cortes. The Prince, his father, partook of this view, having had experience—in the case of his other son, Prince Charles of Roumania—how onerous to his private fortune had been the possession of sovereign power."

"Thus," says Benedetti, "I was cognisant of and had reported to my Government in the early part of 1869 the views and intentions of Count Bismarck before they were revealed to the public."

Count Benedetti, having thus refuted the charges of inertness insinuated against him, enters on a detailed account of his mission to the King at Ems. He left Berlin on the 1st of July, 1870, for Wildbad. On the 7th of July he received a telegram from the Duke of Gramont to go to Ems, stating that an attaché would join him there with instructions.

The development of the drama was rapid. Twelve days afterwards, on the 19th of July, war was formally declared by France! I will not burthen these pages with the official documents relating to the interviews between the King and Count Benedetti, but they are of such

historical interest that I have selected the most interesting of them to form an appendix to this volume.

But there is one point to which I must refer, and which, from an erroneous interpretation of an official telegram published at Berlin, greatly increased the excitement and the heated passion of the populace of Paris against Prussia. The telegram stated "that the King had refused to receive the French Ambassador, and had sent his aide-de-camp to inform him that he had nothing more to communicate."

All telegrams are abrupt, and often apparently discourteous, but this telegram was construed into an insult having been offered to the French Ambassador, and accordingly it fanned the warlike flame then raging at Paris.

There was not a particle of truth in the supposed insult to the French Ambassador. He had been graciously received by the King. He had dined at the royal table, and he was courteously received by the King at the station when invited there to take leave of His Majesty, who was leaving for Coblenz. The charge of discourtesy was simply a pretext made use of to inflame the war party at Paris.

For the information of my readers I have given in the appendix a copy in translation of the above-named telegram. Also a "memorandum of what occurred at Ems, drawn up at the command, and with the approval, of the King;" and further, a report of Prince Radzivill, the adjutant of the King, through

whom the communications with Count Benedetti had been carried on.

These official documents give a clear *exposé* of the whole controversy which led to this sanguinary and unnecessary war.

From these documents it will be seen that the Duke of Gramont's first demand was to obtain from the King the renunciation of the Prince of Hohenzollern. He wrote to Count Benedetti:—"If you obtain the King's consent to revoke the acceptance of the crown of Spain by the Prince of Hohenzollern, it will be a great success. If not, it is war." To facilitate a favourable reception of the French demand, Count Benedetti was instructed to cite the following historical precedents, when foreign princes were debarred from accepting foreign thrones for reasons of European polity.

In 1831 the veto on the Duke of Nemours, who had been elected King of the Belgians. In 1862 France and Russia opposed the election of Prince Alfred of England as King of the Hellenes. In 1862 England and France resisted the candidature of the Duke of Leuchtenberg for the throne of Greece. And the Emperor Napoleon III. acted in the same manner on the occasion of the candidature of Prince Murat for the throne of Naples. "We cannot, therefore, suppose," said the Duke of Gramont, "that we can be refused the application of a principle which the European Powers have already accepted, and so often sanctioned."

When, however, the renunciation of the crown of Spain by the Prince of Hohenzollern was effected,

the French Government made fresh demands on the King for the future, to which he declined to accede. It would almost seem as if war had been predetermined by the French Government, and that the Hohenzollern candidature had been seized upon as a pretext for bringing it about. Following on the King's refusal of an ignominious pledge, war was abruptly declared by France.

It is not my intention to enter into a narrative of the military campaign; it has been already described by abler and more competent pens than mine. The marvellous successes of the German armies astounded and electrified Europe, and their wonderful organisation and discipline elicited general admiration.

But although a man of the pen and not of the sword, I may observe that the strategy of General von Moltke appears to have been the same as that adopted in the Austro-Prussian War. There were three armies, all converging gradually on one central point—the capital of the country—each army gradually advancing being “in touch” with the other two.

Thus, at Königgrätz the Crown Prince's army arrived in time to co-operate with the army of Prince Frederick Charles, and to decide the battle in favour of Prussia. Thus it was also at Sedan, when the Crown Prince, deviating from his line of march on Paris, arrived in time to share the victory with the army more directly opposed to Marshal MacMahon.

In these days, when armies are composed of such vast numbers, this partition into separate armies greatly facilitates the duties of the commissariat department.

The German army, under the supreme command of the King, with General von Moltke as Chief of the Staff, was divided into three separate armies—the first, or Northern army, on the Mosel, under the command of General Steinmetz; the second army in the Palatinate, under the command of Prince Frederick Charles; the third, or Southern army, on the Upper Rhine, under the command of the Crown Prince. This combination had been long previously worked out by General von Moltke.

In opposition to these forces, the Emperor was supposed to have an army of above 200,000 men, styled “*L’Armée du Rhin*,” stationed in and around Metz and in the direction of Saarbruck, under the command of Marshals Bazaine and Canrobert; and a Southern army of at least 100,000 men, under the command of Marshal MacMahon, Duke of Magenta, was stationed in Alsace. A reserve army was organised at the camp of Châlons, and an expeditionary corps of 50,000 men was destined to accompany the fleet from Cherbourg to menace the German coasts.

The first victory was gained by the Crown Prince at Weissenburg on August 4th, which was quickly followed by a second at Wörth on the 6th of August, and on the same day at Spicheren by the army of General Steinmetz.

Further victories were gained by the German armies on the 14th of August at Courcelles; on the 16th at Vionville or Mars-la-Tour; and on the 18th at Gravelotte, a hard-fought action, the result of which

was to cut off the retreat of Marshal Bazaine, and to force him to take refuge with his whole army in Metz.

While Europe was electrified with amazement by the astounding victories of the German arms, consternation, chaos, and confusion reigned at Paris. A council of war was held at Châlons under the Emperor Napoleon. It was there decided to retreat on the capital, and to assemble all the available troops with the army of Marshal MacMahon, and to await under the walls of Paris the advance of the German armies.

On the other hand, from Paris the Emperor was warned as to the dangers of his return, and insistence expressed that the army under Marshal MacMahon should be sent to relieve Bazaine at Metz. Marshal MacMahon unwillingly undertook this very risky operation, and moved first to Rheims, thinking thereby to deceive the enemy as to the object in view; but it was discovered by the never-failing ubiquity and vigilance of the German cavalry, and reported to headquarters. The Crown Prince immediately changed his direction. His army—along with the newly-formed army under the command of the Crown Prince of Saxony, consisting of three corps taken from the army of Prince Frederick Charles—instead of continuing its march on Paris, moved northwards, to intercept the army of MacMahon.

This last effort of MacMahon brought about the crowning discomfiture of the French arms. The French fought magnificently, but they were greatly

outnumbered in strength, and had to contend with an army flushed with a series of continuous victories. The King of Prussia told me subsequently that on the day of Sedan he had himself witnessed a charge of cavalry commanded by General Gallifet, which he, as a military man, described as a "*fait d'armes magnifique*."

On the afternoon of the 1st of September the Emperor Napoleon, who was at Sedan, ordered a white flag to be hoisted, and wrote to the King "that as he had not met with the fate he had desired, of dying with his troops, it only remained to him to surrender his sword to His Majesty."

General von Moltke, on the part of Germany, and Count Wimpffen, on the part of France, signed the terms of the capitulation of the French army on the morning of September 2nd, after much discussion; and at noon of the same day the Emperor Napoleon had an interview with the King. He had been first met by Count Bismarck, with whom he had a long interview in a wayside cottage between Sedan and Donchery.

The meeting of the King with the Emperor Napoleon took place at the small château of Believue, near Sedan. The King arrived with the Crown Prince and several of the German Princes and many officers. The Emperor received the King before the steps leading to the house, and, on the King approaching, took off his military cap and respectfully bowed. He then accompanied the King into the

house, where a conversation took place. The King spoke first. "God had given him the victory in a war which he had not desired." The Emperor said "that he had been forced by public opinion into the war," to which the King replied "that your Minister created that public opinion." After a pause, the King acknowledged "that the French army had valiantly fought." Napoleon accepted this gratefully, but observed "that the German troops were possessed of a discipline which was wanting to the French." He praised especially the Prussian artillery, "which," His Majesty said, "was the best in the world." The King assured him that before and after 1866 all the experiences of other nations had been carefully considered, and all that were good had been adopted. Napoleon had thought that Prince Frederick Charles had decided the fate of Sedan, and was astonished to hear that he was still before Metz, with seven corps d'armée. On the King inquiring whether the Emperor intended any negotiations, the latter replied "that the Empress, as Regent, had alone the power to negotiate. I," he said, "am powerless, and can neither give orders nor offer conditions." *

The offer of the King to place his château of Wilhelmshöhe, near Cassel, at the Emperor's disposal was gratefully accepted, and he expressed a wish that in his passage through France to Germany he might have a strong military escort.

When the meeting ended the Emperor took leave

* Hahn, Geschichte, page 627.

of the King and Crown Prince with deep emotion. The King, on leaving, rode round Sedan to see his army, and was five hours in the saddle before reaching his headquarters.

The Emperor left the château of Bellevue, where the meeting of the Sovereigns had taken place, on the following morning for Wilhelmshöhe, where the Empress Augusta, with that feeling of compassion for those in trouble and affliction which was her nature, had caused every preparation to be made for the comfort of the Emperor.

I will close this interesting episode by giving in translation the text of the telegram sent by the King to the Queen of Prussia after his meeting with the Emperor Napoleon. It was as follows :—

VARENNES, September 4th.

What a thrilling moment was that of my meeting Napoleon ! He was bent, but noble in his demeanour and resigned. I have given him for residence Wilhelmshöhe, near Cassel. Our meeting took place in a small château facing the western glacis of Sedan. From there I rode to the army around Sedan. You can imagine my reception by the troops ! Indescribable ! At half-past seven, on the approach of night, I finished my five hours' ride, but only reached this at one. May God aid us further.

(Signed) WILLIAM.

The King at this time was in his seventy-third year, and it is astonishing how His Majesty bore not only the physical fatigues of this campaign, but still more the mental strain and anxieties which the tragedies of warfare must daily have caused to a character so generous, so chivalrous, and so humane.

But His Majesty lived to enjoy for seventeen years the peaceful fruits of his arduous labours, and to witness the progressing prosperity of the German Empire, of which he had been the restorer, and over which he had ruled with consummate skill.

The King, however, had three collaborators to whom the success of his policy and action were largely, if not entirely, due. I cannot better describe His Majesty's opinions than giving the words in which he proposed a toast on the day following the capitulation of Sedan. He said, "I must to-day, out of gratitude, drink to the welfare of my brave army. You, Minister of War, von Roon, have sharpened our sword; you General von Moltke, have led it; and you, Count Bismarck, by your guidance of the policy for years, have raised Prussia to its present high position. Let us, therefore, drink to the welfare of the army, of the three names I have mentioned, and of each of those present who has aided according to his means towards this successful result."

In the meantime the fortress of Metz, where Marshal Bazaine had retired after the sanguinary battle of Gravelotte, having failed to form a junction with the army of MacMahon, then at Châlons, was invested by the German army under Prince Frederick Charles. Marshal Bazaine's army was computed at about 150,000 to 170,000 men, which was thus rendered useless for any protection of the capital, on which the German armies were rapidly advancing.

On the 16th of September Mr. Malet, of Her Majesty's

Embassy at Paris, was sent out by Lord Lyons, under a flag of truce, with a letter to Count Bismarck, to ask whether he would receive M. Jules Favre, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republican Government, to negotiate the conditions of an armistice. The reply was—"We will treat for the conditions of peace, but not for an armistice."

The headquarters of the King—with whom was Count Bismarck—were at Ferrières, the beautiful château of Baron Rothschild, by whom I had been invited there some years previously, and, to my regret, had been unable to accept his invitation.

On the 19th of September a meeting took place between Jules Favre and Count Bismarck at the château Haute Maison, near Montry, which was renewed the same evening, but ended apparently without any result. It was probably notified to him that no peace could be entered into without a cession of French territory, which did not harmonise with his previously expressed intentions—" *Pas un pouce de notre terrain ; pas une pierre de nos fortresses.*" *

There is no doubt that at this moment, had the French taken a calm and dispassionate view of the position in which they were placed, peace might have been concluded at a lesser sacrifice than was afterwards exacted. Many lives would have been saved, and Paris would have been spared the sufferings of a protracted siege.

But the difficulty was with whom to treat. On the intelligence of the disaster of Sedan, and the

* "Not an inch of our territory ; not a stone of our fortresses."

captivity of the Emperor, the populace at Paris was exasperated against the dynasty and the Government. At a night meeting of the Legislative Assembly, when Jules Favre proposed the deposition of the Emperor, other proposals were made to gain time, so as to decide as to the future form of government, but the mob rushed in and put a stop to the proceedings of the Chamber. Gambetta, with other Deputies, repaired to the Hotel de Ville, when the Republic was proclaimed, and no defender of the dynasty or the constitution raised his voice.

A Provisional Government of Defence was formed—or, rather, formed itself, for it rested on no legal basis—with General Trochu at its head, and Jules Favre Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Empress fled to England, and the Regency virtually ceased to exist. Consequently there was no legal power with whom the German Government could negotiate for peace. Constitutionally speaking, the Empress, as Regent, was alone empowered to negotiate a peace.

Count Bismarck must have fully weighed the extreme difficulties of the position, and the idea, however transitory, may then have manifested itself to him of restoring the Emperor Napoleon to his throne. The question lay between a Republic or an Orleanist restoration, to which M. Thiers inclined. But, in the state of popular emotion at Paris, in the hands of the Garde Mobile, what security would there be for the maintenance of order, and on what support could the restoration of the Empire depend?

Count Bismarck was generally reported to be an anti-Orleanist, consequently he would not view favourably the restoration of that dynasty. Nor could he be favourable to a Republic, knowing the danger to France and to Europe should the Red Republicans and Communists obtain the upper hand. It is not inconceivable, therefore, to suppose that the idea of restoring the fallen dynasty might have crossed his mind as the most prudent course, and as the most practicable to close the war.

Certain rumours of this nature had been in circulation, but no credence was given to them. An incident of a secret and mysterious nature, however, occurred at this time which seemed to confirm the suspicions I have above referred to. I will first give the account of this incident, as related by Madame Carette in her book, "*The Eve of an Empire's Fall*."*

Previous to the departure from Hastings, an event occurred which has always been wrapt in impenetrable mystery, which gave rise to endless conjectures, and to which the key has never been found.

One day a Frenchman, whom nobody knew, M. Regnier by name, called, and asked to see Her Majesty. The Empress, however, refused to receive him, because, under the then critical circumstances, it was deemed prudent not to have any dealings with strangers. M. Regnier was, however, not to be discouraged, and he put himself in the way of the Prince Imperial in one of the walks he was accustomed to take, with his tutor, M. Fillon, as his only companion. M. Regnier introduced himself to the Prince, and told him he was going to

* See Madame Carette. "*Eve of an Empire's Fall*," pages 371, 372.

Wilhelmshöhe to pay his respects to the Emperor. He then asked whether the Prince would not like to send his father a view of that part of the country where he was staying, and he drew from his pocket a view of Hastings.

The Prince then wrote a couple of lines on the photograph, and added his signature, and returned it to M. Regnier, with his thanks for the sentiments he had expressed.

On hearing of this singular adventure, the Empress was greatly vexed, and telegraphed to the Emperor at Wilhelmshöhe not to give heed to anything which might be communicated by an unauthorised person who said he was going to Wilhelmshöhe, and who might produce a photograph with the Prince Imperial's signature.

It was not to Wilhelmshöhe, as it appeared, that M. Regnier intended to go. He was at Ferrières two days afterwards, and there he obtained an interview with Count Bismarck, to whom he presented the photograph signed by the Prince Imperial as a proof of the genuineness of his mission. It was never known what his motives were for seeking this interview, but after it was over he obtained a safe conduct for Metz, at which place he arrived two days later.

At Metz, thanks to the photograph, which he again produced as an introduction, M. Regnier succeeded in reaching Marshal Bazaine. He represented himself to the Marshal as the bearer of a message from the Empress, who, he said, with the consent of Prussia, was about to sign a treaty of peace. It was, therefore, necessary that Her Majesty should have at her side someone representing the army of Metz, and she requested that either Marshal Canrobert or General Bourbaki should be sent to her immediately.

Marshal Bazaine accordingly sent for General Bourbaki, and ordered him to follow M. Regnier, and place himself at the disposal of the Empress. General Bourbaki was one of the Emperor's aides-de-camp, and had given abundant proofs of his devotion.

But on learning that he was to separate himself tem-

porarily from his troops, he raised some objections. Marshal Bazaine, in reply, alluded to the perilous position of the army, and strongly urged him to go at the invitation of the Empress. He even gave the General a suit of civilian clothes, in order that he should not attract attention in going through the Prussian lines. General Bourbaki asked for more precise instructions. "You will do whatever the Empress bids you," replied the Marshal; and so the General consented, feeling certain that nothing would be required of him which his patriotism and his honour would not allow him to perform. He set off, accompanied by M. Regnier, who had been provided with a safe conduct by the German authorities available for two persons.

On arriving at the outposts, M. Regnier introduced a Prussian colonel to the General, who said he had been awaiting the General twenty-four hours, and proposed to take him to Prince Frederick Charles. The astonished General, however, refused to accompany him, saying that he had no business to transact with the Prince. M. Regnier then left him, saying that he would return immediately with the treaty of peace ready to sign. However, he did not return, and the General was accompanied to the frontier by the Prussian colonel, who, on taking leave of him, confessed that he knew who he was, and that he considered it an honour to have been appointed his escort.

The foregoing narrative of this mysterious adventure of M. Regnier is given by Madame Carette, who was of the household of the Empress. I will now give a further elucidation, as published by Marshal Bazaine, in his book on the Siege of Metz, and leave my readers to form their own judgment of this singular occurrence.

Marshal Bazaine states:—

That on the evening of the 23rd of September a French citizen, wearing the badge of the Geneva Cross, presented

himself at the outposts before Metz, and was conducted to my headquarters, and was announced as courier of the Emperor. The individual in question stated that his name was Regnier, and had come on the part of the Empress, with the consent of Count Bismarck; that his mission was a verbal one, and the object of it—to propose that either Marshal Canrobert or General Bourbaki should repair to England, to be at the disposal of the Empress. As a passport he showed the signature of the Prince Imperial on a photograph of Hastings, and asked me for my signature. Not having a photograph, he asked me to affix my signature next to that of the Prince Imperial, as a souvenir of our interview. As he gave me various details in regard to his relations with the Court of the Empress, I believed in his mission. I consequently replied that I would place him in communication with the officers named, leaving them free to take their own course.

M. Regnier said that it was to be regretted that a treaty of peace had not terminated the war after Sedan; that the maintenance of the German troops on French soil would ruin the country, and that it would be a great service to it to obtain an armistice to lead to peace. In regard to this, the army of Metz, the only one organised, would give a guarantee to the Germans if it were free, but, doubtless, they would demand, as a pledge, the delivery of the fortress of Metz.

I replied certainly, if we could get out of the *impasse* in which we were, with the honours of war—that is to say, with arms and baggage—we could maintain order in the interior, and cause the terms of the convention to be respected; but there could be no question of the town of Metz, the governor of which, appointed by the Emperor, only depended on him. All this was only a simple conversation, to which I attached a secondary importance, M. Regnier having no written instructions either from the Empress or from Count Bismarck.

Besides, the general officer who would accept the mission would have to leave the camp *incognito*, in company with some Luxembourg doctors who had been reclaimed by the Central

Committee of Luxembourg, according to a letter of September 20th, of which M. Regnier was the bearer. This personage appeared to be acting without the knowledge of the German military authorities, and it was only later that I was convinced of their connection and common understanding as regarded the arrival of M. Regnier at Metz, by the following notification :—

“Note concerning the re-entry of General Bourbaki into Metz, delivered by an aide-de-camp of Prince Frederick Charles.

“By order of His Royal Highness, the Chief of the Staff has replied to the request of M. Regnier for authorisation to go to Metz, with the object of inducing a general officer to accept a political mission.

“That no obstacle will be raised to the journey of the said general officer, but it was well understood that during the siege this General could not return to the fortress.

“M. Regnier was charged to make this condition known to the general officer before he undertook the journey.

“His Royal Highness was accordingly much surprised when, some days ago, this General inquired from neutral territory whether he could re-enter Metz.

“The request, forwarded to His Majesty the King, had not yet been answered, but the General had made known since that he would not longer wait for the decision requested.”

M. Regnier had first an interview alone with Marshal Canrobert on the 24th of September, who, on the plea of health, declined to accept the mission, and afterwards with General Bourbaki, who accepted it.

The only verbal instructions I gave to General Bourbaki were the following :—

“To explain to the Empress the real and military situation of the army of Metz; to ask in what political and diplomatic position was the Government of the Regency, established in virtue of the Constitution of 1870, and, if it no longer existed, to release us from our oath.”

This officer left at night, with the passport of M. Regnier, in company with the Luxembourg doctors.

This, in all truth, is the reported dark intrigue which caused General Bourbaki to leave the army. On the 29th of September, Marshal Bazaine then continues, I received through General Stiehle, the Chief of the German Staff, a telegraphic despatch, dated from Ferrières (where Count Bismarck was at the headquarters of the King), inquiring whether I would accept the propositions expressed by M. Regnier concerning a military convention relating to the army of Metz, the majority of which was faithful to the Emperor. I immediately answered General Stiehle that I knew nothing of M. Regnier, who had presented himself to me as authorised by Count Bismarck, and besides as sent by Her Majesty the Empress Regent, but with no written credentials. That in our conversation, therefore, quite *officiuse*, I had replied to the ideas he had suggested for intervention, and that the only acceptable one was the marching out of the army with arms and baggage, but without including the surrender of the town.

M. Regnier, it may be well understood, did not return.

I was told that a Foreign Minister asked Prince Bismarck if he thought that the Emperor Napoleon could return to France, to which he replied, "*Mais oui, certainement il pourrait retourner, mais il manquera le train!*" meaning that his indecision would prevent him from seizing the right moment.

Marshal Bazaine continues his narrative by referring to the telegram from Ferrières, of which the following was the text:—

FERRIÈRES, September 28th, 1870.

Will Marshal Bazaine accept the surrender of the army of Metz on the conditions which M. Regnier will stipulate, remaining within the instructions that he will receive from the Marshal? *

I replied to General von Stiehle as follows:—

* No signature was affixed to this telegram, which was forwarded, through General Stiehle, to Marshal Bazaine.

“METZ, September 29th, 1870.

“MONSIEUR LE GÉNÉRAL,—I hasten to inform you, in reply to the letter which you did me the honour to send me, that I cannot absolutely reply in the affirmative to the question put by Count Bismarck. M. Regnier, who says that he is the envoy of Her Majesty the Empress, without any written credentials, made known to me that I was authorised to send to the Empress either the Marshal Canrobert or General Bourbaki. He asked me at the same time if he could submit conditions which might enable me to enter into negotiations with the Commander-in-Chief of the German army before Metz for its capitulation.

“I replied that the only thing I could do would be to accept a convention with the honours of war, but that I could not include the town of Metz in the convention. They were the only conditions, in fact, which military honour permits me to accept, and they are the only ones which M. Regnier expressed.”

M. Regnier had asked me (said Marshal Bazaine) if, the case occurring, he might report my words to Count Bismarck. I saw no objection; but I could not consider this proposal as an overture that I made to the German Government, as the telegram from Ferrières seemed to imply.

Thus ended the adventure of M. Regnier, and he was never heard of again. I will only add that in Dr. Busch's “Bismarck during the Franco-German War,” page 189, he is mentioned as having had an interview with Count Bismarck on the 28th of September at Ferrières.

On the 10th of October Marshal Bazaine states that a Council of War was held at Metz, at which it was unanimously decided to send General Boyer to the headquarters of the King at Versailles, to ascertain

the real situation of France, the intentions of the German authorities in regard to a military convention, the concessions that might be expected in the interest of the army and of France, and also of peace.

General Boyer returned to Metz on the 17th of October. At a Council of War he reported that he had had two interviews with Count Bismarck, the result of which was—(1) The refusal declared by the Prussian Government to treat with the Government of the National Defence, unless with the reserve of the convocation of a National Assembly, which alone could have sufficient authority to guarantee the execution of a treaty.

(2) That the adjournment by this *de facto* Government (not recognised by Prussia) of the convocation of this Assembly, authorised the Government of the Confederation to conclude that the power emanating from the plebiscite of 1870, voted by the French nation, still represented the Government *de jure*.

Finally, Count Bismarck required: (1) A declaration of the army of Metz in favour of the Regency. (2) The surrender of the fortress of Metz—terms which we could not accept, because a declaration in favour of the Regency would be to question its legitimacy, and that the Emperor could alone release the superior general commandant from his oath.

General Boyer left Metz on October 12th, arrived at Versailles on the 14th, and had an interview with Count Bismarck. The following is a summary of his report to the Council on the subject:—

General Boyer stated the object of his visit, and on referring to Regnier, Count Bismarck asked whether that was his real name. General Boyer replied that Marshal Bazaine had never before heard of him.

Count Bismarck then related how Regnier had introduced himself to him and submitted his plan, and asked for an authorisation to go to Metz, in order to sound Marshal Bazaine in favour of the Regency. "The man," said Count Bismarck, "appeared to me sincere, and it is certain that he was so. He had not mentioned his plan at Hastings, where he was unwelcome and his services were rejected." Count Bismarck then related his conversation with him, and the explanation of the telegram to Marshal Bazaine, and ended by saying that the Marshal's answer proved that M. Regnier was in no way charged to propose conditions. "Besides," added the Count, "I only sent that telegram to prove to M. Regnier that I had not any great confidence in his conditions, for he had declared that the Marshal excluded the town of Metz from any combination, whereas it was especially Metz that we wished to have."

"There is no wish to exclude the Imperial dynasty," said Count Bismarck, "nor that form of government which has maintained order for twenty years. On the contrary, we would treat more willingly with the Regency than with any other Government. It is still the form of government which is the best to insure the future. . . . The present position of France does not allow us to treat with a Government which offers no chance of durability, and, consequently, can give no serious guarantee of a lasting peace."

Count Bismarck then related his interview with the Emperor after Sedan. He was surprised that the Emperor had declined (as being a prisoner) to treat, observing that the Regency alone could do so; and from that moment he was so convinced that it was in the interest of the Regency to treat, that he accepted at once the overtures of M. Regnier, believing that he came in the name of the Regency.

Resuming the idea of allowing the French army to leave

Metz, Count Bismarck said that not only must the possibility of maintaining the obedience of the army be provided for, but also the question of the treaty, and, in order not to run the risk of granting the army freedom of action, and then seeing the negotiations for peace fail, assurances must be given him of the acceptance of the conditions for peace, however exorbitant they may appear.

Someone should, therefore, be sent to Hastings or Cassel, that the two negotiations should be carried on simultaneously. He thought that it would be better that the question should be settled at Hastings, because, treated on neutral soil, it would not appear exposed to the pressure of a foreign element. "Go to Hastings, General," he said, "and obtain power from the Empress to surrender Metz, as Marshal Bazaine has no power to do so; it will be a guarantee for us."

Count Bismarck further stated "that France must select for herself her form of government. We shall not, as in 1815, commit the fault of imposing one. We see also that the present Republican Government is not acting in good faith. It has twice wished to convoke the elections—on the 2nd, and then the 16th, of October—but it always postpones the moment, feeling that they will not be favourable to the Republic. The Conservative element, which comprises the largest number in France, will not have this Republic of terror. Be assured that if to-day a plebiscite was voted, the Emperor would still have the majority."

On taking leave, Count Bismarck told General Boyer that he should have to report the conversation to the King, who would probably consult General von Moltke. He promised the answer of the King for the following day, on which he called on General Boyer, and informed him of the resolution taken by the King in council with Count Moltke and the War Minister.

It was agreed for the moment (proceeds the report) to put aside the idea of the capitulation of Metz, and the object to attain was an assurance that the army of Metz would remain faithful to its oath, and would be the champion of the Imperial dynasty. That Marshal Bazaine would publish an official declaration, by which the country would know that it could count on its support if it wished to rally round the Empress.

By this action the army would take an engagement which would compromise it with the Republican party, and Count Bismarck would see the effect produced in France by the declaration. To this would be added a Manifesto by the Empress, who, sure of the support of the army of Metz, would appeal to the nation, would reclaim her rights, and would ask the nation to consecrate them by a fresh vote. Only then could they treat, with any chance of success, a plan which would bring about a general peace, and stop the effusion of blood.

The Council of War then decided, by seven votes to two, that General Boyer should go to England, in the hope that the intervention of the Empress Regent with the King of Prussia might obtain favourable conditions for peace and the army.

Marshal Bazaine then states in his work, previously referred to, and whence I have taken the foregoing information, that he received no direct intelligence of the result of the mission of General Boyer to Hastings, but on the 24th of October, by the following despatch of Count Bismarck, through the medium of Prince Frederick Charles, he learnt that these loyal endeavours had failed, the guarantees demanded by the German authorities being regarded as excessive, and their acceptance in no way depending on the chiefs of the army :—

[TELEGRAM.]

“October 24th, 1870.

“General Boyer wishes me to send you the following telegram :—

“‘The Empress, whom I have seen, will make the greatest efforts in favour of the army of Metz, which is the object of her profound solicitude and of her constant preoccupation.’

“I ought, however, to observe to you, Monsieur Le Maréchal, that since my interview with General Boyer, not one of the guarantees, which I had pointed out to him as indispensable before entering into negotiations with the Imperial Regency, has been realised, and that the future of the cause of the Emperor was in no way assured by the attitude of the French nation and army; it is impossible to enter into negotiations, the results of which Her Majesty alone would have to make acceptable to the French nation. The proposals which reach us from London are, in the present situation, absolutely unacceptable, and I avow, to my great regret, that I do not see any further chance of obtaining a result by political negotiations.

“ (Signed) DE BISMARCK.”

The contents of this letter was confirmed by the following letter from the King of Prussia to the Empress :—

“VERSAILLES, October 25th, 1870.

“MADAME,—Count Bernstorff has telegraphed to me the words which you were pleased to address me.

“I desire with all my heart to restore peace to the two nations, but to attain it, the probability, at least, must first be established, that we shall succeed without continuing the war against the whole French forces.

“At present I regret that the uncertainty in which we are in regard to the political disposition of the army of Metz, as well as of the French nation, does not permit me to give effect to the negotiations proposed by your Majesty.

“ (Signed) WILLIAM.”

On the 23rd of September the fortress of Toul capitulated. Although of only second rank, its capitulation was of great importance to the army, as it commanded the railway to Paris, and had greatly inconvenienced the provisioning of the troops, and the furtherance of the heavy artillery for the siege of Paris.

On the 27th of September, Strasbourg, after an energetic siege, surrendered to General Werder, to the inexpressible joy of the whole German nation, who hailed with delight its restoration to Germany.

On the 28th of October Metz capitulated to Prince Frederick Charles. No instance in history records a capitulation with so large a garrison. It consisted of three marshals, fifty generals, 6,000 officers, 173,000 men, fifty-three eagles with banners, and an enormous war material. The fortress was reduced by want.

I had been charged by the French Government to pay monthly the "*Solde de captivité*" of the French prisoners of war, whose numbers, with the army of Metz, would now be increased to nearly 300,000 men, distributed in ninety-two separate localities. It was a work of labour, and occupied the whole time of Mr. Dering, second secretary to the Embassy, whom I had selected for the duty, and who performed it with exemplary zeal and ability. I secured the services of M. de Bleichröder to arrange the financial business. I had printed papers specifying the names, the rank, the regiment, the date of capture, of arrival. I had

a list of the "solde" to be paid monthly to each rank from the French Ministry of War.

I arranged, through the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, that each Prussian commandant of the fortress or locality where the prisoners were interned should select a French officer from among them to fill in the lists I sent in triplicate, and to sign them. They were then forwarded to me by the commandant. I sent them to M. de Bleichröder, who forwarded the required sum to each commandant for distribution, and I signed the bills for payment on the firm of Baron Rothschild. Of the triplicate papers, I sent one copy to the French Minister of War, I reserved one for the French Embassy on renewal of relations, and the other was deposited in the archives of Her Majesty's Embassy for future reference in case of need.

At the close of the war I received the thanks of the French Government for the admirable manner and order in which the accounts were rendered.

I may relate on this occasion a rather singular incident. On the arrival at Cassel of Marshal Bazaine as prisoner, his secretary wrote to me by his orders to ask for his "Solde de captivité." I replied, through Mr. Dering, that on the official list sent to me by the French Minister of War there was no "Solde de captivité" for a Marshal of France. He replied to me himself by a letter written in curious English, requesting me to send the highest "Solde de captivité" on my list, which accordingly I did. He was the only

Marshal of France who claimed this “consolation,” and I reported the demand to the French Ministry.

In acknowledgment of their meritorious services, the King conferred on the Crown Prince and Prince Frederick Charles the rank of Field-Marshal. This was the first time a Prussian royal prince was invested with this rank.

CHAPTER XIII.

Treaty between Great Britain, France, and Prussia for Neutrality and Independence of Belgium—Investment and Siege of Paris—Interview of Jules Favre with Count Bismarck—Armistice and Surrender of Paris—Entry of German Troops limited to Champs Élysées and vicinity—Resignation of Gambetta—Jules Favre's Expostulation against Enormity of War Indemnity—Bismarck's Reply—Constituent Assembly opened at Bordeaux 12th of February—Retirement of Ministry of Defence—Appointment of M. Thiers—His Patriotic Mission—Ranke's Reply to Thiers—Peace Negotiations between Thiers and Bismarck—Preliminaries Signed 26th of February—Terms of Preliminaries—Accepted by National Assembly at Bordeaux—Review by King of Prussia at Longchamps—Creation of German Empire—Title of German Emperor accepted by King of Prussia—Proclamation of Empire at Versailles January 18th—Repudiation in November, 1870, by Russia of Clauses 11 and 13 of Treaty of Paris—Conference in London—Siege of Paris impossible if Gauges had differed—Russian and German Gauges—Lines by Lord Stratford de Redcliffe—Departure of Emperor William from Versailles—Enthusiastic Reception at Berlin—Opening of First Imperial Diet—Audience of the Empress—Alliance with Austria Foreshadowed—Title of Prince conferred on Bismarck—Audience of Emperor William—Conversation with His Majesty.

At the opening of the Franco-German War it was deemed advisable by Her Majesty's Government further to secure the neutrality and independence of Belgium. A treaty to that effect was signed by Lord Granville and Count Bernstorff on the 9th of August, 1870.*

A similar Treaty in the same terms—*mutatis mutandis*—was likewise signed by Lord Granville and the Marquis de Lavalette, the French Ambassador in London.

* See Appendix.

Each of the belligerent Powers agreed to defend, in unison with England, the neutrality of Belgium, in case it was violated by the other belligerent.

Another important event took place at the end of July. It was the announcement by the Duke of Gramont of the withdrawal of the French troops from the Roman States. The Emperor's Government, the Duke of Gramont said, had full confidence that the safety of the Pope would not be endangered, and that the Convention of September, 1864, would be faithfully observed by Italy. On the 20th of September the Italian troops entered Rome without any serious resistance. Italy was thus free; the unity of Italy was carried out, and Rome became the capital of Italy, to the great joy of the nation.

Notwithstanding the advantageous offers made by the Italian Government, the Pope declined all compromise and reconciliation with the Italian Government, and maintained his hostile attitude to the day of his death.

After the total collapse of the French arms at Sedan and the fall of the dynasty, it had been hoped that peace might have been concluded. But these hopes were completely dispelled by a Circular-Despatch of M. Jules Favre to the European Powers, in which he injudiciously and unnecessarily asserted that no peace would be concluded by France which included the cession of "an inch of her territory or a stone of her fortresses." I firmly believe that the King and Bismarck would have gladly made peace at that

moment, on reasonable and fair terms, but that their pacific intentions were completely dispelled by the imperious and injudicious attitude of M. Jules Favre and the Republican Government.

Immediately after the capitulation of Sedan, the German army continued its march on Paris, and encountered no opposition, for there was no French army in the field.

Before the investment of Paris, a portion of the Ministry retired to Tours. Gambetta (who followed subsequently in a balloon!) was their active spirit, and his object was to arouse the nation to a national resistance to the invading army, forgetting apparently that, on the fall of Metz and Strasbourg, which could not hold out very long, the army of Prince Frederick Charles, amounting to 240,000 men, and that of General Werder before Strasbourg, amounting to about 60,000, would be free for operations in the interior, and to strengthen the forces about Paris. Thus early there were about 700,000 armed Germans in France; and before the close of the war the German armies amounted to nearly a million of men. What could the French do circumstanced as they were? The wiser part of valour (and the armies had evinced great bravery) would have been discretion, but of this quality they gave no proofs. Had they made peace when it was in their power to do so, they would have escaped all the suffering of a protracted siege, the great loss of life it occasioned, and the terms would have been easier and less humiliating.

It is not my intention to enter into the operations of the war, or the military events connected with the siege, nor am I competent to do so. They have been described by many abler pens than mine.

On the 24th of January, 1871, a fresh attempt was made by Jules Favre to arrange an armistice and the surrender of Paris.

After several days of negotiation, an armistice was signed to enable the convocation of a Constituent Assembly, which would decide as to the continuance of the war, and the conditions of peace. By the armistice it was agreed that the French regular troops in Paris should lay down their arms, and be regarded as prisoners of war; that the forts around Paris should be given up to the German troops, and that the artillery encircling Paris should be dismounted. The National Guard, for the purpose of keeping order, were not to be disarmed, and to retain their artillery.

The Prussian flag was hoisted on the forts on the 30th of January, and they were then occupied by the German troops. Immediately on the fulfilment of the conditions of the armistice, permission was given for supplies of food to enter Paris.

The elections for the Constituent Assembly were ordered, and it was opened at Bordeaux on the 12th of February.

Jules Favre was accompanied to Versailles by his son-in-law and Count d'Hérisson, orderly officer of General Trochu, President of the Government of Defence.

I am indebted to the work, "*Bismarck's Denkwürdigkeiten*," published by an anonymous writer, for the following analysis of what took place at this important interview between Count Bismarck and M. Jules Favre, which, I believe, is taken from a narrative by Count Hérisson.

They drove to Sévres in a carriage of the Emperor Napoleon, from which the Imperial arms had been removed, and from thence proceeded to Madame Jessé's house, the residence of Count Bismarck, and on the first floor found themselves in his presence. He wore the white uniform of a colonel of cuirassiers. After an exchange of civilities, Jules Favre said "he was come to resume the negotiations broken off at Ferrières," but Bismarck represented "that the position was no longer the same; and if you hold to your former principle, 'Not an inch of our territory; not a stone of our fortresses,' it is useless to discuss further. My time is precious, yours also, and I do not see why we should waste it." He then changed his tone, and said, "Since Ferrières, you have become aged and very grey, M. le Ministre." Jules Favre said it was owing to the cares of government. "Moreover," continued Bismarck, "you have come too late. There, behind that door, is a delegate of the Emperor Napoleon III., and I am about to negotiate with him."

It would, says the narrative, be difficult to describe the consternation and fear which these words produced on the Minister. The "Cuirassier" saw with a single glance the enormous advantage that he had obtained, and, while fixing his eyes on the door—which probably was only a cupboard—said, "Why should I really treat with you? Why give to your Republic an appearance of legality in signing a treaty with their representative? In reality, you are merely a band of rebels. Your Emperor, should he

return, would have the right to shoot you down as traitors and rebels."

"But," cried out Jules Favre, "should he return, there will be civil war and anarchy."

"Are you so certain of that?" replied Bismarck. "Besides, I do not see what harm civil war would do to us Germans."

"Do you not fear, then, M. le Comte, to drive us to the last extremity? To embitter still more our resistance?"

"Yes, indeed, your resistance!" said the Chancellor, in a loud tone. "You are proud of your resistance? That you may know it, M. le Ministre, if General Trochu was a German general I would have him shot this very day. Listen well to me! One has no right, in view of humanity, in the face of God, for the sake of miserable military glory, to sacrifice a city of more than two millions of souls to famine. The railways on all sides are cut off, and if we cannot restore them within two days, which is not at all certain, a hundred thousand will die daily. Talk no more of your resistance—it is a crime."

The Chancellor then rose, as if to take leave, and put his hand on the handle of the door behind which the delegate of Napoleon III. was supposed to be awaiting his interview. Thereupon Jules Favre sprang up, hastened to Count Bismarck, and called out, "No, do not. All you wish; but do not impose on France, after all her misfortune, the shame of being obliged to endure a Bonaparte." On resuming their seats, Jules Favre commenced to praise the advantages of the Republic, of the impersonal government, which alone could bear the hard or ignominious conditions without being overthrown, which alone is in a condition to ensure to Germany the fulfilment of her treaties, etc., etc.

Bismarck laughed. "Are you," said he, "so certain that France is as Republican as you say?"

"Completely so," said Jules Favre.

"I am not entirely of your opinion, M. le Ministre.

Before we negotiated with you we studied the spirit of France. Notwithstanding the war, which has been so unfortunate for you, which was more forced on Napoleon III. by the French nation than desired by him; notwithstanding the defeats of your armies, nothing would be easier, believe me, than to restore the Empire. It might not please in Paris, but it would be accepted in the provinces—a plebiscite would do the rest. No; the reason why we have not gone in with Bonaparte is because it appeared to us more advantageous to treat with you. As to the reported love of France for the Republic, it would have disappeared with wonderful rapidity. You have not been long in power. Wait a while. When you have governed men for several years, you, a Liberal, will be transformed into a Conservative. From a Republican you will become a Monarchist. Believe me, one cannot lead or bring to prosperity a great nation without the principle of authority—that is, the Monarchy.”

Jules Favre having protested against these opinions, Bismarck added, “Look at me! How did I commence? I was a Liberal, and by force of thought and reflection, by the demonstration of facts, and by experiences with mankind, I, who love my country, and wish for its welfare and greatness, am a Conservative.”

Five minutes later the double principle of a cession of territory and a war indemnity was accepted. It was seven o'clock, and Count Bismarck invited us to dinner. Twelve officers and chancery officials were in uniform awaiting our arrival. Jules Favre sat on the left, and Count Hérisson on the right, of Count Bismarck, for he had regarded Jules Favre as Minister and not as Plenipotentiary. The dinner was richly served, but there were only two wax lights stuck in two wine bottles. This (perhaps intentional) circumstance alone recalled camp life. There was much gaiety and conversation, which was in French, but Jules Favre was absorbed with despair, and sat silent.

After dinner Count Bismarck, with Jules Favre, returned

to the first floor, and the discussion of the preliminaries for the surrender of Paris recommenced.

Count Hérisson gives the following account of a second interview of Jules Favre with the Chancellor:—

Before entering on the discussion, Count Bismarck offered cigars to Jules Favre, which he declined with thanks, saying that he did not smoke. “You are wrong,” said Bismarck. “When you enter on a discussion which may lead to vehement remarks, you should smoke. When one smokes, the cigar is held between the fingers; one must handle it, not allow it to fall, and thereby violent movements of the body are avoided or weakened. In regard to the intellectual state, it does not deprive us of our intellectual capacity, but it produces a state of kindly repose. The cigar is a diversion; and this blue smoke which rises in curves, and which the eye involuntarily follows, pleases and renders us more flexible. The eye is occupied; the hand is engaged; the organ of smell is gratified; one is happy. In this state one is very disposed to make concessions, and our business—that of diplomatists—consists of continual mutual concessions.”

After deliberating on other various questions, the topic was raised, whether Garibaldi should be included in the armistice? “But I must have him,” exclaimed Bismarck. “I want to exhibit him in Berlin with a placard on his back with the inscription ‘Italian gratitude.’ After all we have done for these people, their conduct is really outrageous.”

The two questions of difficulty in the discussion were in regard to the fate of the garrison and the National Guard of Paris; and, secondly, whether the German army should march into Paris?

With regard to the surrender of the garrison as prisoners of war, insistence was made by Bismarck.

Jules Favre strongly opposed the disarming of the National Guard, and also of the entry of the German army into

Paris, which, however, was not to extend beyond the Champs Élysées.

Bismarck replied that he would have agreed to the non-entry of the German army into Paris, but the King and the military insisted upon it. This is the reward for our army. "When," said Count Bismarck, "I return home, and meet a poor cripple with a wooden leg, he will say, 'The leg I left before the walls of Paris entitled me to complete my conquest. This diplomatist, who is in possession of all his limbs, then prevented it.' We cannot expose ourselves on this point to violate the public feeling. We shall enter Paris, but not go beyond the Champs Élysées and its vicinity. We will leave their arms to sixty battalions of the National Guard."

The armistice convention for twenty-one days was then accepted and signed on the 28th of January by Count Bismarck and M. Jules Favre.

I was told that on Jules Favre learning the amount of "six milliards of francs" as the war indemnity demanded by Germany, he was in consternation. His hair stood on end, and he exclaimed "that it was an unheard of sum, and that there had not been as many minutes since the birth of our Saviour!"

To which Count Bismarck cynically replied "That he had provided for that, and that the financier charged to treat this question would date from the Creation." (It was Herr Bleichröder, a Jew.)

M. Gambetta had issued a Decree declaring a number of persons, partisans of the late Government, disqualified for election to the Constituent Assembly, with a view evidently to prevent the election of those opposed to the continuance of the war. Bismarck

protested against this act, as contrary to the armistice convention, and it was annulled by order of the Government at Paris, on which Gambetta, who formed one of the Government at Tours, resigned on the 6th of February.

The French Constituent Assembly was opened at Bordeaux on the 12th of February. The Government of the Defence retired, and M. Thiers was elected President of the Ministry.

M. Thiers had been strongly opposed to the war. He had only lately returned from a *patriotic* mission to the Courts of Europe, with the object of eliciting their sympathy and support. The former was not wanting, but he utterly failed in obtaining any hopes of material aid. At his age it was a courageous act to incur the fatigues of such a mission, and to risk the dangers to his health by a journey to Russia in the depth of a winter which was unusually severe.

Meeting Professor Ranke (the renowned Prussian historian) at Vienna, Thiers asked him, "*Mais contre qui combattez vous ?*" to which Ranke replied, "*Contre Louis XIV.*," in reference to the recovery of Alsace, which had been taken from Germany by that sovereign suddenly, and had been incorporated with France ever since.

On his return to Berlin, I asked Professor Ranke whether this conversation with Thiers was true, and he confirmed it.

Immediately on his accession to power, Thiers opened peace negotiations with Count Bismarck, in

association with Jules Favre, newly appointed by him as Minister for Foreign Affairs. Thiers fought hard for Metz and Lorraine, but he found Bismarck immovable in his demands; and he foresaw the total failure of the negotiations if he did not yield. The only alleviation granted was that Belfort was left to France, and the war indemnity was reduced to five, instead of six, milliards, or to 200 millions sterling.

On the 26th of February the preliminaries of peace were signed at Versailles by Count Bismarck, as Chancellor of the North German Confederation, with whom were associated the Ministers of Bavaria, Würtemberg, and Baden, and by M. Thiers, President of the French Ministry, and Jules Favre, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The terms were as follows:—Alsace with Strasbourg, a great portion of Lorraine with Metz, were ceded to Germany. A war indemnity of five milliards to the German Emperor; one milliard to be paid at once, the remainder within three years from the date of the ratification of the Treaty. The evacuation of French territory to commence on the ratification of the Treaty by the National Assembly at Bordeaux. The evacuation to proceed in proportion as instalments of the indemnity were paid.

By an additional Convention the armistice was prolonged to the 12th of March.

On the 1st of March, 1871, the National Assembly at Bordeaux accepted the Treaty by 546 to 107 votes, in the following terms:—

“The National Assembly, yielding to necessity and rejecting the responsibility, accepts the Preliminaries of Peace signed at Versailles on February 26th.”

On the 1st of March the King held a review of 30,000 of his troops at Longchamps, which passed off, happily, without any accident.

Thus peace, after a war in which the lives of thousands had been sacrificed, and the homes of thousands rendered desolate, was happily restored, and was received in Europe with hearty thanksgiving, as terminating the sufferings and miseries which this war had entailed.

The results to Germany were of incalculable importance. The long-cherished hopes of the nation for the restoration of a German Empire and for the unity of Germany were now realised. Two provinces, which in previous centuries formed the landmarks between Germany and France, were regained, and the brilliant success of the German armies raised the German Empire to a zenith of power and prestige which it had not possessed since the time of Charles the Fifth.

To France, in her dire misfortune, let us hope that it will be a salutary warning against embarking with a “light heart” in wars of aggressive ambition, and against the evil results of yielding to popular clamour, and being influenced by the momentary pressure of an impetuous mob.

The object of the war, on the part of France, was to prevent the unification of Germany under Prussia, and

the establishment of a great military Power at her frontier.

The result of the war was to create and solidify that very unity to which Count Bismarck aspired, but which otherwise might have taken years to attain.

I must here revert to the important events which took place at the opening of this eventful year (1871).

During the war, when the tide of victory was continuously flowing with the German armies, the conviction arose, both with the German sovereign princes and their subjects, that a stronger link than international treaties should bind together Northern and Southern Germany. This conviction, shortly after the commencement of the war, led to negotiations with reference to the blending of the Southern with the Northern States in one German Confederation. It was the natural result of the German armies being united under one command and fighting for a common cause.

Bavaria, as the leading South German State, took the first step after Sedan, and expressed the wish to negotiate a constitutional unity of Germany. The Prussian Minister, Delbrück, was sent to Munich to treat on this subject. Later negotiations were continued at Versailles, and led to the conclusion of treaties with all the South German States. Some difficulties arose with Bavaria and Würtemberg, but they were speedily removed, and finally, through the influence and at the instigation of Count Bismarck, the King of Bavaria wrote to the King of Prussia to offer to

His Majesty the title of German Emperor, in the name of the German sovereigns and princes.

It was agreed by all the German sovereign princes and free towns that the German Confederation should henceforth bear the name of “*Deutsches Reich*”—“German Empire,” and that the King of Prussia should take the title of “*Deutscher Kaiser*”—“German Emperor.”

These changes were accepted by the “*Reichstag*,” and a deputation of the “*Reichstag*” proceeded to Versailles to present an address to the King, at the head of which was Dr. Simson, president of the “*Reichstag*.”

The address was presented on the 18th of December, 1870, and the new Constitution of the German Empire was officially published in the *Federal Gazette* on the 31st of December, 1870.

The 18th of January, 1871—the anniversary of the old Prussian coronation day of the Elector Frederic III.—was selected by the King for the solemn proclamation of the new empire. It took place in the “*Galerie des Glaces*” in the palace at Versailles. An altar had been erected in the hall, and the ceremony opened with Divine Service.

Deputations from the German troops then besieging Paris were sent with their flags and standards. The King was surrounded by the sovereign princes of Germany and the princes of his royal house; behind them the generals and ministers, at the head of the latter the Federal Chancellor, Count Bismarck.

After Divine Service the King proceeded to the daïs, and having read the Act proclaiming the Empire, ordered the Chancellor to read the "Proclamation to the German people." Thereupon the Grand Duke of Baden, in a loud voice, said, "Long live His Majesty the Emperor William," which was responded to with boundless enthusiasm.

It was a singular decree of fate that the restoration of the German Empire under the Prussian sovereignty should have been proclaimed on French soil, and in that regal palace which, in the halcyon days of France, was the residence of that sovereign who had annexed Alsace to France! If Louis XIV. could have risen from his grave, what wondrous surprise, not to say wrath, would he not have evinced? But his conscience might have told him that it was the just retribution for the many injuries which France had caused to Germany by ambitious and unjust wars.

I now refer back to an important incident which burst on Europe like a flash of lightning.

On November 14th, 1870, the Russian General, Annenkow, arrived at Versailles with a letter from the Emperor Alexander to the King of Prussia. He was the bearer also of a communication to Count Bismarck, announcing that the Russian Government considered the 11th and 13th Articles of the Treaty of 1856, with reference to the Black Sea, as no longer binding on Russia.

On Bismarck receiving Prince Gortschakoff's note.

he was very much put out, and is reported to have exclaimed, "Stupid fellows, they have begun four weeks too soon," meaning that they ought to have waited for the fall of Paris. But Prince Gortschakoff was determined not to lose his prize, and presented, therefore, his bond for payment before its maturity.

In previous portions of this work I have referred to the anxiety of Prince Gortschakoff to cancel these portions of the Treaty of 1856; and have expressed my suspicions that, during the presence of Prince Gortschakoff at Berlin at the time when war was declared, an agreement was come to between Count Bismarck and Prince Gortschakoff on this subject. But the moment selected by Prince Gortschakoff for pressing his claim was most inconvenient to Bismarck. France was in the throes of discomfiture, and helpless; the siege of Paris was not ended; England, Austria, and Italy might offer strong opposition to the Russian repudiation of the Treaty. Was Bismarck to side with them, and throw over Russia? or, by siding with Russia, to incur the hostility of England, Austria, and Italy at a most critical period of the siege of Paris?

In this difficult conjuncture it was absolutely necessary for Her Majesty's Government to be able to confer personally with Count Bismarck. Even previously to this I had suggested to Lord Granville the desirableness of sending some accredited agent to Versailles to confer personally with Count Bismarck, for the Federal Government was at Versailles and not at Berlin. This new Russian move decided him to

send Mr. Odo Russell to Versailles, and he could not have selected a more able or efficient diplomatist.

The collapse and momentary decrepitude of France deprived England of that ally which had successfully combated Russia in 1854-55, and with the other Great Powers had signed the Treaty of Paris in 1856, which Lord Palmerston is said to have stated to Baron Brünnow would not last ten years. I have also recorded in this work a suggestion I made to Lord Clarendon in 1865, that England and France would act wisely and generously, in anticipation of a Russian repudiation of the 11th and 13th clauses of the Treaty, by releasing her spontaneously from those humiliating clauses, with the assent of the other signatory Powers. They had fulfilled their object. They had lasted ten years, and they had given breathing time for Turkey to complete her defensive system. Should no spontaneous release from them be offered to Russia by Europe, it was obvious that she would seize the first favourable opportunity to release herself.

That favourable opportunity had now presented itself. The manner in which it was made was injudicious. It was an arbitrary act—the violation of a solemn treaty; and was thus viewed and denounced by England and the other signatory Powers.

Count Bismarck gave the best counsel for bringing about legality where it had been so wilfully transgressed. He suggested the reunion of the Paris Conference of 1856, and as it could not meet at Paris, he proposed that the Conference should be held in London.

The Conference met without delay; the arbitrary violation of the Treaty of 1856 was strongly denounced; the Act itself was not recalled, but the Conference recorded the principle to which Russia assented—that no article of a treaty could be set aside without the assent of the Powers by whom the treaty had been signed.

There had been a question of the appointment of M. Jules Favre as plenipotentiary to represent France at the London Conference, but, being then Minister for Foreign Affairs, it was felt that his absence from Paris at so critical a time would have been of serious moment. It was, therefore, decided by M. Thiers to confide the representation of France at the Conference to the Duc de Broglie, who had been just appointed French Ambassador in London.

The Conference was ably presided over by Lord Granville, and the Treaty recording its result was signed on March 13th.

To revert to the siege of Paris. It had never been conceived possible that such a siege could have been undertaken. The fortifications of Paris had been the conception of M. Thiers, and carried out by him; but at that time they were regarded as directed rather against an internal than an external foe. Artillery had then not reached the perfection it has since attained. Had the railways in France been of a different gauge to those in Germany the siege of Paris could not have been undertaken, for it would have been impossible to have brought up the siege guns and heavy artillery

to Paris, nor would it have been possible to have provided, except at great cost, for the supplies of the enormous army before Paris.

When railways were first introduced into Russia, I recollect that the Emperor Nicholas sternly opposed their having the same gauge as the German railways, and for military reasons. The Emperor's luxurious train, which was originally constructed for the Emperor Napoleon, and purchased by the Emperor Alexander II., cannot enter Russia, and is now always kept at the frontier.

The question of railways brings to my recollection some spirited lines, composed by Sir Stratford Canning, afterwards Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, on the railway in 1848, on our journey from Brussels to Hanover. They were as follows :—

“ A mingling stream
Of smoke and steam
Trails on the twilight sky.
The hills grow dark ;
Each fiery spark
Shoots like a meteor by.

Now doubly dread
To the thunder tread
Of the mail train plunged in gloom ;
With the rush and roar
Of sounds that pour
Thro' the tunnel's bellowing tomb.

Like a thing of life
In mortal strife
Snorts the engine, short and fast.

From its nostril wide
Whirls the steam-cloud's tide,
 With the gush of a furnace-blast.

O'er the iron path
Of the monster's wrath,
 Lord of its wild career,
With dauntless eye
Of devilry,
 Stands the bold engineer.

His fingers strain
The brazen rein
 That curbs his flame-born steed ;
His face all bare
To the rushing air,
 Outstrips the whirlwind's speed.

Flung o'er the track
Of the boiler's wrack,
 His loose locks backward float.
On the crested wave
No heart more brave
 E'er throbbed on the whaler's boat.

There seems to him
Both life and limb
 In the massive engine's frame ;
He feels the force
Of a thousand horse,
 And his spirit burns like flame.

Tho' death be near,
No sound of fear
 Breaks from his bosom's might.
The cry so shrill,
That tokens ill,
 Is the shriek of the vapour sprite.

Sullen and grim
In breadth of limb
 The stokers watch below ;
Their swarthy cheeks
With lurid streaks,
 Like cooling lava, glow.

On, on they rush,
Till morning's blush
 Mantles the face of Heav'n.
Then paler seem
The coals that gleam
 In the air-flood past them driv'n.

Swift, swift they fly,
Yet dare not vie
 With the word of magic, sped
In fleeter race
Than thought can trace,
 When a sign comes from the dead.

No voice is heard,
No wire is stirr'd,
 It leaps from goal to goal ;
Sound lags behind,
Mind springs to mind
 On the lightning of the soul.

Still swift and strong
They scour along,
 With a routed squadron's din ;
Tow'r, steeple, tree,
Whate'er they see,
 In a giddy witch-reel spin.

What, past ? what, past ?
All start aghast !
 Is't time for the fleet express ?

Steam, dust, and smoke
Around them broke—
More not a soul could guess.

No stop, no check ;
Yon coming speck
On the sight yet dimly grows.
In duskier wreaths,
As the boiler seethes,
The train's long banner flows.

Beneath the shade
By its dark folds made
Right merrily on they speed ;
To each inside
There's a joy and pride,
Like those of a captive freed.

But hark ! a crash,
As when the flash
Of Heaven's own bolt hath rent,
With hurricane stroke,
Some broad old oak
That ne'er to the tempest bent.

'Tis heard, that shock,
As if some-rock,
Upheaved by an earthquake's force,
Had strewed the shores
Where ocean roars
In its ruin's headlong course.

Great Heaven ! they've met—
The trains have met !
Like ships from the battle line,
When snapped each mast
By a furious blast
They clash on the hissing brine.

Engine and train,
And scores of slain,
 To a hideous mountain swell,
That, heaving, speaks,
In moans and shrieks,
 As if its womb were hell.

All other sound
By horror drown'd,
 On earth, in air, is still ;
Amazed, unmann'd,
The gazers stand—
 No help, no thought, no will.

With right hand clench'd,
His bright eye quench'd,
 His manly forehead clear,
On the reeking heap,
Like one asleep,
 Lies the dauntless engineer."

I have ventured to give my readers the foregoing lines, in admiration of their distinguished composer and of his great abilities and genius. They have never, I believe, been published, and I have introduced them into this work in memory of my late respected chief, and in order that they should not be lost to the public.

Immediately after the acceptance by the National Assembly at Bordeaux of the Preliminaries of Peace, the Emperor-King left Versailles (after a residence there of five months) for Berlin. His Majesty inspected various corps of the German army previous to leaving French territory, and was everywhere, on his route through Germany, received with great enthusiasm, and with

rapturous applause at Berlin, which was brilliantly illuminated on the night of his arrival.

On the 21st of March the Emperor William opened the first Imperial Diet—or “Reichstag.” His Majesty ended his speech with the following words:—

“May the restoration of the German Empire be the omen also to the German nation of renewed internal strength. May the Imperial German war which we have so gloriously conducted be succeeded by a not less glorious peace, and may the task of the German people be henceforth devoted to proving themselves victors in the contest for the development of peaceful industry.”

His Majesty was accompanied by the Crown Prince, the Princes of the Royal House, General von Moltke, and General von Roon.

On the 23rd of January I had solicited an audience of the Empress to felicitate Her Majesty in the name of the Queen, on the Imperial title conferred on His Prussian Majesty. The Empress having graciously invited me to dinner on the 25th of January, in celebration of the wedding day of the Crown Prince and Princess, was pleased to receive me in private audience previous to the banquet, when I had the honour to convey to Her Imperial Majesty the Queen’s congratulations and her sincere wishes that the felicitous event conferring the Imperial title on His Majesty the King, by the unanimous voice of the German Sovereigns and Princes, would tend to the happiness and welfare of the German nation, and to the future peace of Europe.

Her Imperial Majesty expressed her thanks, as also

her sincere attachment to Her Majesty the Queen, and referred in affectionate terms to the anniversary of the union of the Crown Prince and Princess, which established, as Her Majesty hoped, an indissoluble link between the two countries.

In granting this audience Her Majesty observed that she had declined all audiences of similar felicitations, reserving them till she could receive them with the Emperor-King. She had made this exception for me, in order to prove how deeply she valued the felicitations and good wishes of the Queen.

After the brilliant successes which had attended the German armies against France, Count Bismarck, with that astuteness for which he was distinguished, foresaw the value to the new Empire of an Austrian Alliance, and he lost no occasion of expressing his wish to cultivate the most intimate relations with Austria. This feeling was entirely reciprocated by the Emperor Francis Joseph.

On the 14th of January, 1871, Count Bismarck addressed a despatch to General Schweidnitz, the Prussian Minister at Vienna, notifying to the Imperial Government the restoration of the German Empire with the title of Emperor conferred on the King of Prussia.

This notification was acknowledged in the most friendly terms, and the wish expressed for a mutual good understanding between the two Governments. General Schweidnitz had been most graciously and cordially received by the Emperor of Austria when charged to deliver a letter from his sovereign, announcing

his acceptance of the Imperial title. The Emperor expressed himself very unreservedly on this occasion, stating that it was his earnest desire to entertain the most friendly relations with the German Empire, and that his new Ministry heartily concurred in his views.

These expressions of the Emperor produced a most favourable impression at Berlin, and tended to strengthen the good relations between the two Governments.

It was a position of some delicacy, in view of antecedent history, when the German Imperial title and dignity had been held by so many members of the House of Hapsburg; but the chivalrous Emperor Francis Joseph accepted it with that grace, dignity and good feeling which distinguish his character, seeing that it was the future, and not the past, which should be his guide for the welfare and prosperity of his Empire. He accordingly accepted and reciprocated with sincerity and cordiality the friendly wish and expressions of the German Emperor for mutual amity between the two Empires. From this period dates the foundation of the so-called Triple Alliance to which the King of Italy subsequently acceded. This alliance, formed solely for defensive purposes, has been the means of maintaining the peace of Europe for twenty years, and still offers the surest guarantee for its continuance. But, unfortunately, this alliance has not reduced the burthen of the vast armies which are draining their national resources. On the contrary, fresh levies are being introduced which cause increased taxation for the people, already too heavily

burthened, and must necessarily produce discontent and give cause for anxiety in the future.

On the birthday of the Emperor William, Count Bismarck received the title of Prince and a large dotation (a million of thalers = £150,000). Generals von Moltke, von Roon, and von Blumenthal were made Field Marshals. Count Bismarck, on receiving his new title, observed that it was singular that he, who had always been opposed to small Princes, should now be made one of them—" *J'ai pesté,*" he said, "*toujours contre les Princes, et voilà que le Roi m'y associe.*"

General Baron Wrangel, on the part of the Emperor of Russia, and General Count Bellegarde, on the part of the Emperor of Austria, were sent on special missions to congratulate the Emperor William on his return to his capital.

I had an audience of the Emperor on the 22nd of March, to present my felicitations on the anniversary of His Majesty's birthday. I placed in His Majesty's hands on this occasion the Queen's letter in reply to His Majesty's notification of his acceptance of the Imperial title accompanying it with congratulations on His Majesty's return to his capital.

The Emperor charged me to convey to the Queen his best thanks, and his sincere appreciation of the kind interest Her Majesty had ever taken in his welfare. His Majesty conversed with me at some length on the events of the war, expressing deep sympathy with the great loss of life it had occasioned.

His Majesty said that on entering France he was

much struck with the prosperity of that country, remarking that it grieved him to think that it should be subjected to the ravages of war. His Majesty said that he found everything in perfect prosperity and order—houses, farms, land, roads, bridges, and all in admirable condition, evidencing wealth and industry. He had done all he could to reassure the population, and to prevent them from taking flight; but they had fled, and that much disorder and destruction had taken place in consequence, which might have been avoided.

His Majesty made no allusion or comment whatever in regard to the French army, nor did a word of reproach fall from His Majesty in regard to the French nation. The feeling which appeared to pervade his mind was that of deep regret and sympathy for the losses and miseries which the war had produced.

In referring to the grave state of affairs at Paris, produced by the acts of the “Commune,” His Majesty stated that he had given orders for the German troops to halt in their present positions, but not to retrograde, nor to reoccupy any position or territory which had been evacuated. This was a necessary precaution, without implying any other intention but that of acting on the defensive.

His Majesty observed, with much humility, that the wonderful results achieved by his army had surpassed all expectations, and were, in his estimation, of so marvellous a nature, that he could only attribute their success to the favour and support of a Higher Power, who had chosen him as an instrument of the Divine Will.

The Emperor dwelt on the enthusiasm and fervour displayed by the German nation, and said that on his return from Ems he was quite astounded by the patriotic ovation he had received. Never, said His Majesty, had the feelings of the German people been so roused, or so strongly manifested since the war of liberation in 1813, and the result has proved that the aspirations for unity had taken deep root in the heart of the nation.

The audience here ended, and on taking leave of the Emperor, I was charged by him to convey to the Queen his sincere thanks for the kind interest which Her Majesty had evinced towards him.

CHAPTER XIV.

Insurrection of the Paris Commune—Its Suppression, with Great Destruction and Loss of Life—Treaty of Peace Signed at Frankfort by Bismarck and Jules Favre—Triumphant Entry of German Troops into Berlin—Unveiling of Monument to Frederick William III.—Successful Financial Operation of Thiers for Liquidation of War Indemnity—Unfriendly Feeling towards England—Unsettled State of Roumania—Improved Relations between Austria and Germany—Count Beust—His Resignation—Count Andrassy—Meeting of the Sovereigns of Austria and Germany at Gastein and Salzburg—Fresh Credentials to Foreign Representatives at Berlin—My Suggestion to Lord Granville for a Change of Representatives at Berlin—Offer to me of the Embassy at St. Petersburg—Arrival of Emperor of Russia at Baden—My Presentation to His Majesty by Empress Augusta—His Congratulations on my Appointment—Audience of the Emperor William and Empress Augusta to present Letters of Recall—Offer by His Majesty of Black Eagle—Explanations for not being able to accept it—Audience of the Queen at Windsor—Delayed by the Illness of the Prince of Wales—Contrast of the Prussia of 1837 with 1872—Causes of Her Rapid Rise—Her Military Organisation—Suggestion for its Partial Adoption—Anecdote of Conversation with Emperor William—Departure for St. Petersburg.

THE close of the siege of Paris did not, unfortunately, prove to be the close of the sufferings of the Parisian population. Fresh woes were preparing for them, but they were, like the provocative war which had now ended, of their own creation.

Frequent attempts had been made during the siege to upset the Ministry of the National Defence. On the evacuation by the German troops of the western forts they were immediately seized by the Revolutionists, supported by the National Guards, 60,000 of whom had been left with their arms, at the request of Messrs.

Thiers and Jules Favre, for the maintenance of order and public tranquillity at Paris—they having declared that any attempt to disarm them would cause a conflict in the capital.

Soon after the departure of the Germans the seat of Government, with the National Assembly, had to move to Versailles, and was under the protection of a considerable force of the regular army, under the command of Marshal McMahon. Paris was occupied by the mob and the National Guards, and had to undergo a second siege. Barricades had been erected, and a reign of terror commenced. When a sufficient force of the regular army had been formed under Marshal McMahon, the capital was attacked, and after six days of severe fighting, was recaptured from the Communards, with severe losses on both sides. The mutual exasperation was intense. No quarter was given, and the loss of life was appalling. The Tuileries and many of the public buildings were burnt to the ground by the insatiable vengeance of an infuriated mob. M. Thiers and the Government acted with great firmness, and successfully put down a revolt of the blackest dye. It was a severe but a salutary lesson to the Parisian population, and since then twenty-two years have passed without the occurrence of a similar outbreak.

Every facility was given to M. Thiers and his Government by the Emperor William and Prince Bismarck to enable them to overcome the Communist insurrection, without interfering in the contest; larger forces were permitted to be assembled in the neighbour-

hood of Paris than the Preliminaries of Peace had sanctioned, and the German armies were instructed to halt in their positions but to make no retrograde movement. A request was addressed to Prince Bismarck by M. Thiers to be permitted to increase the French army at Versailles beyond the limit of 40,000, as stipulated in the Preliminaries of Peace. This request was immediately agreed to, and M. Thiers was informed in reply that he was at liberty to augment the French army to 80,000 men.

It was a grievous and heavy task which M. Thiers and his Government had to perform, but they performed it with courage, energy and determination. Greater injury was inflicted on the capital by this insensate revolution than during seven months of siege by a foreign enemy.

The Government of M. Thiers was fully convinced that their difficulties could alone be overcome, and France saved from complete ruin, by a thorough and decided understanding with the German Government; and suggested to M. Jules Favre to confer with Prince Bismarck at Frankfort, to which Prince Bismarck readily assented. At the moment of their meeting Jules Favre received a telegram from Paris, stating that Saint-Cloud was in possession of the French army; that the Trocadero was in their hands, and also the Arc de Triomphe and the École Militaire; and that it was hoped that the whole city would be in their possession in the evening.

This victory over the Commune in their strong

position surprised Prince Bismarck, who had imagined that it could not have been accomplished without German assistance, and it strengthened the position of Jules Favre in the negotiations.

Prince Bismarck expressed himself to Jules Favre in frank but conciliatory terms, stating his wish and hope that all ill-feeling would cease between the two nations, and that friendly relations should exist between them. On Jules Favre remarking that their future ambassador at Berlin would have a difficult and uncomfortable berth, Prince Bismarck replied "Not at all. He will be the luckiest of all your Ministers. We will put him in 'cotton wool,' and so overwhelm him with kindnesses that he will feel that he is indispensable to us."

The Treaty of Peace was signed at Frankfort on the 10th of May, on the basis of the preliminaries concluded at Versailles—with some modifications and enlargement.

After the conclusion of peace, and the suppression at the same time of the Communist Revolution at Paris, a portion of the German troops commenced their homeward movement.

The solemn entry of the German army into Berlin took place on the 16th of June, in a similar, but still more brilliant, manner to that of the year 1866. With the exception of the Guards, the German armies were represented by deputations. The street leading to the Brandenburg Gate on which is the "Car of Victory" (which was carried off by Napoleon I.—and was restored in 1815) was lined on either side by cannon taken from the French. Eighty-one captured eagles, flags and

standards were carried by non-commissioned officers of all regiments who had won the Iron Cross. Boundless enthusiasm greeted the Emperor, his officers and the troops.*

The unveiling of the monument to Frederick William III. terminated this military pageant. It was an impressive ceremony, performed by the son of that distinguished monarch who had fought for the liberation of Germany from the French yoke half a century before. when His Majesty placed on the monument to his father the emblems of victory gained in a wonderfully successful war, which had raised Prussia to the zenith of her military renown.

It was now of essential importance to France to be freed at the earliest moment from the German occupation, which was dependent on the payment of the full war indemnity of 200 millions sterling. In facilitating this operation M. Thiers rendered a signal service to his country. His first idea was to ascertain the amount of foreign stock held in France. Having ascertained that it represented a sum sufficient to liberate France from foreign occupation, his next object was to invite all French subjects holding foreign stock to exchange it for investment on favourable terms in a Patriotic National Loan, to discharge the war indemnity to Germany and thus to relieve the country of the German occupation.

This proposal was heartily responded to by the French nation, in whose breasts the love of country is so deeply engrafted, and by these means the French

* See Hahn, page 707.

soil was freed from the foreigner much earlier than the period fixed by the treaty of Frankfort.

It was on the 2nd of September, 1873, when the German armies had entirely evacuated France, that the unveiling of the "Monument of Victory" on the Königsplatz took place which had been erected by the grateful Fatherland to the "Victorious army."

This typified the final conclusion of a war solely undertaken by France from a spirit of jealousy of Prussia, and of ambition for aggrandisement. The Emperor had long striven against this adventurous policy of his entourage and military advisers, and only yielded to the pressure of the restless Parisian mob and of the army. The public opinion of the nation was avowedly for peace, but that impetuous population of Paris yearned for war, instigated by political agitators, who, devoid of patriotism and impelled only by lust of personal gain, were ever ready to sacrifice the best interests of the country to gratify their own vanity and cupidity.

The Parisian Press also bore no small part of the blame, by inflaming the popular passions, and was greatly instrumental in causing a war which led to the ruin and humiliation of France. It is sad to think that in the nineteenth century, the age of civilisation and progress, such a war of devastation could have taken place. Let us hope that the severe trials thus experienced by France will be a wholesome warning to the present and future generations.

During the war an unfriendly feeling against England was manifested in Germany, which was greatly

fomented by the Press. It arose principally from a supposition—wholly groundless and unwarranted—that our leanings were towards France, and that we had not strictly adhered to neutrality, in allowing contraband of war to be supplied to her. These accusations were ably and satisfactorily repudiated by Lord Granville, but they left their traces behind, and for some time after the war a strong anti-English feeling continued to exist in Germany; but happily it evaporated, and there now exists, and more strongly since the fall of Prince Bismarck, that cordiality between the two countries which I trust will never be disturbed.

In the spring of 1871 the state of Roumania gave cause of apprehension to Europe. On the Emperor William's birthday a banquet was given in Bucharest by the German Consul-General. A mob attacked the building where the banquet was held and completely destroyed it. Several of the guests, and among them the German Consul-General, were wounded by stones and other missiles. The excitement against the Germans was very great, and the military authorities were either unable or unwilling to intervene.

Herr von Radowitz, the German Consul-General, reported to his Government that Prince Charles had decided to leave the country. In such an event a Republican movement in Roumania might have been attended with serious danger to the tranquillity of the East and to the Turkish Empire. Nor would the establishment of a Republic contiguous to Russia and Austria have been agreeable to those Powers.

I subsequently learnt from Prince Bismarck that Prince Charles of Roumania had resigned the powers he had received from the Chambers into their hands, but they had refused to accept them, and that he had thereupon formed a Conservative Cabinet. On the fall of the Bratiano Ministry the country rallied round the Prince, order was restored, and the vessel of State righted itself.

Had the Prince abdicated, a vacuum would have been caused difficult to fill up, and serious consequences to Europe might have resulted from it.

I have already reverted to the improved feeling in the relations between Austria and Prussia, and of the mutual desire for a cordial understanding between the two Governments. This was greatly promoted by a friendly exchange of correspondence between the two Sovereigns. The frank and loyal acceptance of the results of the wars of 1866 and 1870 by the Emperor Francis Joseph were duly appreciated by the German Emperor, and gave signal proofs that Austria had no wish or intention to reclaim rights of which she had been dispossessed, or to enter into any combination which could lead to a coalition against the German Empire. The German question being definitively settled, there was an entire cessation of any jealousy or rivalry between Austria and Germany. In view of their mutual interests, in view of the important military position of the two Empires in Europe, stretching from the Baltic to the Adriatic, and in command of Central Europe, an Austro-German alliance offered the best

safeguard for the maintenance of the general peace and of the *status quo* in Europe.

Count Beust was at this time Minister-President and Minister for Foreign Affairs in Austria. His hostility to Prussia had been proved by his antecedents ; and there is no doubt that up to the Franco-German War he had entertained hopes that Austria might rescind the results of the war of 1866 by a coalition with France. It has never been distinctly ascertained what hopes he had held out to the Duke of Gramont of Austrian assistance previous to that war ; but there is no doubt that Count Beust, in his interviews with the Duke of Gramont at Vienna, did convey to him an impression of Austrian co-operation with France, and that later, on the return to Vienna of Count Vitzthum (who had been sent on a mission to Paris in July, 1870), Count Beust had written on the 20th of July the following to the Austrian Ambassador at Paris :—

“Count Vitzthum has reported to our august master the verbal message with which he had been charged by the Emperor Napoleon. The Imperial words, as also the explanations which the Duke of Gramont was pleased to add to them, have removed all possibility of a misunderstanding that the unforeseen outbreak of this sudden war may have occasioned. Have the goodness to repeat to His Majesty and his Ministers, that, faithful to our engagements, as recorded in the letters exchanged last year between the two Sovereigns, we consider the cause of France as our own, and that we will contribute to the success of her arms within the limits of what is possible (*dans les limites du possible*).”

I do not intend to unravel further the mystery of the policy of Count Beust in regard to the Franco-

German War. At the conclusion of it he clearly saw the futility, and, I might say, the fatality, of looking to France for regaining for Austria the position she had lost in Germany. He completely veered round, and accepted, I believe conscientiously, the offers of friendship and amity with Germany. He viewed it also as a means through Prussia of re-establishing cordial relations with Russia, and thus forming the “Drei-Kaiser Bund” or “The Three-Emperors’ League.”

A meeting of the Sovereigns of Austria and Germany took place at Gastein in 1871—which was afterwards renewed at Salzburg, as a return visit to the Emperor William, who had visited the Emperor Francis Joseph at Ischl.

But in the new order of things between Austria and Germany the position of Count Beust, as Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs, was seriously menaced. Internal dissensions had arisen in the Cabinet, which ended in the resignation of Count Hohenwart and his colleagues. For some time past Count Beust had made many enemies. His unpopularity had increased, and the resignation of Count Hohenwart, so quickly following that of Count Belcredi, both of which were caused by differences regarding the administration of internal affairs, indicated to the Emperor the necessity of a change in the Chancellorship of the Empire. The talents of Count Beust, his ability and skill, were admitted and appreciated, but he was not a genial personage, and above all he was not of Austrian birth, and he was a Protestant.

It was signified to him that he should send in his resignation, in order to relieve the Emperor from an embarrassing position, which he immediately did, and for which the Emperor thanked him—expressing his regret at the necessity, which had cost him much pain, of losing his services.

It cannot be denied that Count Beust had rendered valuable service, and most especially in having arranged the differences with Hungary, by the institution of the “Dual” system, which has worked well, and restored the ancient loyalty and devotion of the Hungarian nation to the House of Hapsburg.

Count Beust was appointed Austrian Ambassador in London and a Member of the Upper House of the Austrian Parliament.

Count Andrassy, a Hungarian nobleman of high repute and considerable influence in his native country, was appointed to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, as successor to Count Beust.

Count Andrassy was of a commanding and attractive exterior—of Oriental type. He was gifted with great perspicacity, large-minded and liberal views, and that decision of character so necessary to become a ruler of men. He was high-spirited and warm-hearted, like all his countrymen, and was ever governed by a feeling of justice and honour in the performance of duty. He was a true patriot, and held unflinchingly to his party, even when patriotism was mistaken for disloyalty. He was no disciple of Kossuth, and though claiming what he considered to be the legal rights of his country, he

was loyal to his Sovereign. His appointment as successor to Count Beust was not only an act of grace and magnanimity on the part of his Sovereign, but a signal proof of the confidence which His Majesty reposed in him, and which was fully justified by his able administration of the foreign policy of Austria in subsequent years.

On the creation, or, rather, restoration, of the German Empire, it was necessary for the German representatives at foreign Courts to receive fresh credentials as representing the German Emperor, and for foreign representatives at the Court of Berlin to be accredited to the Emperor. I accordingly suggested to Lord Granville the desirableness, in the interests of Her Majesty's service, that a new representative should be accredited as Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Imperial Court of Berlin. I observed that for a very considerable period I had been successively Chargé d'Affaires, Envoy Extraordinary, Ambassador to the King of Prussia, and Ambassador to the North-German Confederation, and during the past five years had been a witness—if not a pacific actor—in two wars of the greatest magnitude that had taken place in our era, in the latter of which I was charged with the care of the French subjects. It was not possible to avoid a certain friction under such circumstances, although I am happy to record in these pages the obliging assistance I received from all the Prussian officials, and especially from M. de Thile, MM. de Delbruck and Philipsborn, and many others, for whose courtesy and kind attentions I herewith express my grateful appreciation.

During this period not an incident occurred which produced the smallest disagreement in my relations with the Prussian Government or their officials, and I look back with pleasurable reminiscence to my long residence at the Court of Berlin.

But with a new Empire, and a new order of things, I considered that there should be a new representative as British Ambassador at the Imperial Court, and I represented this accordingly to Lord Granville, who concurred in this view.

After a cursory visit to London, which enabled me to confer personally with Lord Granville, I obtained leave to go to Baden-Baden. During my residence there I received a letter from Lord Granville offering to me the Embassy at St. Petersburg, which I accepted. I was half tempted to decline it, on account of climate and expense, but it was a high and important post, and of great political interest, although one which required considerable tact and judgment. Lord Granville requested me to consider his communication as confidential, and not to mention the change he had proposed to me.

Shortly after receiving his letter, the Emperor of Russia arrived at Baden to visit the Empress of Germany. Her Majesty invited us to a party in honour of the Emperor Alexander, and on this occasion I was presented to him by the Empress Augusta. His Imperial Majesty congratulated me on my appointment, and expressed his satisfaction at it. I told His Imperial Majesty that Lord Granville had imposed silence on me

in regard to it, and, as I had supposed, in consequence of awaiting His Imperial Majesty's concurrence. "Oh," said His Majesty, "I replied immediately by telegraph, expressing my satisfaction at your appointment."

The Empress Augusta, who first learnt it from the Russian Emperor, graciously expressed her regrets at my leaving Berlin, where Her Majesty had known me for thirty-two years.

I continued my residence at Baden till the end of the autumn, with a short interval, when I went to Berlin to make the necessary arrangements for the transport of my carriages and effects and servants before the navigation from Stettin was closed.

From Baden I went to London to receive my credentials and for my audience of the Queen, and to kiss hands on my appointment.

Before leaving Baden I had an audience of the Emperor William, to present my letters of recall. His Majesty received me with his ever-gracious and kind manner. He expressed great regrets at our leaving Berlin, saying that he hoped we should meet annually at Baden. He stated his intention to confer on me the Grand Cross of the Black Eagle, the highest Prussian Order. I explained to His Majesty that, by the rules of our service, we were not allowed to accept any foreign decorations; that I was equally gratified by His Majesty's gracious intention, and deeply appreciated the value of the honour he wished to confer upon me. The King then said that he would write to the Queen to request the permission as a special favour

to himself. I urgently requested His Majesty not to do so, observing that an exception in my favour would invidiously affect others, and I had some difficulty in dissuading His Majesty from taking the course he had proposed. I told His Majesty that I required no emblem to remind me of His Majesty's gracious acts of kindness to me during a period of over thirty years, of which I should ever retain a grateful and lasting recollection.

I afterwards had an audience of the Empress-Queen, to present the Queen's letter and to take leave. Her Imperial Majesty was most gracious and kind in the expressions of her regret at our departure, reminding me of the many years she had known me, and assuring me of her high esteem and regard.

It was a great sorrow to me bid adieu to their Imperial Majesties, from whom both Lady Augustus and I had received so many marks of kindness, and to whom we were sincerely devoted. But, as Madame de Staël truly said, "*La vie est un éternel adieu.*"

On leaving Baden we went to London. We arrived at the time of the grave illness of the Prince of Wales, and I was obliged to defer my departure for St. Petersburg until the Queen was able to grant me an audience. It was a most anxious moment, for the Prince's life hung on a thread. All classes of the nation were shrouded in gloom and anxiety: crowds gathered round the telegraph offices till late in the night to learn the last bulletin, and everywhere the deepest interest and sympathy were manifested. Prayers

were offered up in all the churches for the Prince. Those prayers were graciously answered by the Almighty Ruler of events, and the life of the Prince was mercifully spared to the nation. It is on such occasions that the innate loyalty of the British nation is instinctively shown, and it was never more expressively evinced than during the illness of the Prince, which had called forth the deepest sympathy, not only in the vast dominions of the Queen, but throughout the world at large. His popularity was universal, and by his gracious, genial and winning manners, and his consummate tact, he won the hearts of all who approached him.

It was not till January, 1872, that the Queen was graciously pleased to receive me in audience to kiss hands on my appointment. Immediately after my audience I started for St. Petersburg with my family. On my passage through Paris I had an interview with M. de Rémusat, then Minister for Foreign Affairs, on some matters relating to the charge of French subjects in the North-German Confederation during the war, who had been under my care. He thanked me for the very clear and correct manner in which I had delivered the accounts of the payments made to the French officers, prisoners of war, which, he said, had been of great service to the Ministry of War, enabling them to ascertain the exact sum each officer had received as “solde de captivité” during the war. The monthly receipts from the ninety-two fortresses and localities where they were interned gave the name

of every officer, his rank, the regiment in which he served, the date of his capture, and the amount paid to him, which was countersigned by the senior French officer of the fortress or locality. This enabled the Ministry of War at a glance to know the exact sum to which the prisoners of war were still entitled.

I had some conversation with him on the financial position of France, and I suggested the introduction of a stamp duty on all receipted bills, observing that it was the cheapest and easiest mode of taxation without compulsion, escaping the expense of a tax gatherer and his importunity, and that further it was a mode of extracting money from the pockets of the public without it being known who paid it, whether the purchaser or the seller.

M. de Rémusat approved the idea, and it was shortly after introduced.

I passed two days at Berlin, to pay my respects to the Emperor and Empress. We were invited to dine at the Imperial table, and on the following day were invited to an evening party at the palace. The dear old Emperor was in excellent health, and as cheery and gracious as ever. The Empress received us with the same kindness and tokens of regard she had always evinced towards us. This was the last time I saw Field-Marshal von Moltke, and I had a long conversation with him on the incidents of the late war, of which he spoke in terms of great modesty in regard to his own services, and without an expression of reproach or depreciation of France. He was truly a

pure and noble character, endowed with great gifts and a high and chivalrous mind—a true patriot—a loyal subject of his sovereign—and a zealous Christian, whose every act was governed by a deep religious feeling.

My final departure from Berlin, where I had many friends, occasioned me deep regret. I had arrived at Berlin for the first time in 1837, when Prussia was a kingdom of moderate pretensions, and had barely recovered, under the patriarchal sway of Frederick William III., from the French occupation, and the heavy charges she had borne by the war of liberation from the yoke of the first Napoleon. I left Berlin in 1872, when Prussia had been fused into an empire, of which the King of Prussia was Emperor, with hereditary succession. Since the days of Charlemagne no State had acquired so rapid and so dominant a position in the councils of Europe. This wonderful position is mainly to be attributed to her military organisation, and the unceasing and persevering care devoted to the training and discipline of her army. This system was first introduced into Prussia by the Minister Stein, and carried out by Generals Scharnhorst and Gneisenau. Its object was to circumvent the obligation imposed on Prussia by Napoleon I. after the campaign of 1806, limiting the strength of her army.

The compulsory system of military service in Prussia, by which every man is liable for service in the active army between the age of twenty-one and twenty-four, transformed the army of Prussia into a “nation of

soldiers," and enables Prussia, on the approach of war, to call under arms a vast army composed of men who have already passed three years under the colours.*

These reserves (or, as they were then termed, "Landwehr") were called out annually for drill, or for the autumn manœuvres, by which means their military instruction and drill were annually renovated.

The organisation was altered by the reforms introduced by the Emperor William on his accession, which during five years were combated by the second Chamber of the Prussian Parliament, but were, nevertheless, carried out by His Majesty. Although the organisation was altered, the principle on which it was founded remained intact, and is adopted by all the Federal States of the Empire. The chief difficulty has been in providing these reserves, when called out, with the necessary officers, but this has been partially met by increasing the number of officers in the regiments of the regular army, who, in event of war, are transferred to the reserves.

A compulsory military service in England would never be accepted, as being opposed to the principles of British freedom; but I consider that there is a wide difference between "compulsory" and "obligatory."

The obligatory would consist of the duty which every man owes to the parent State. In stating that every man between the age of eighteen and twenty-one should be subject to be drawn for military service,

* By the new German Army Bill, the recruits will only have to serve two years under the colours. July, 1893.

it is not intended that every man so drawn should be compelled to serve. A graduated scale of penalties could be imposed on the wealthy and those in easy circumstances, while an alleviation might be found to relieve the working-classes of the duty imposed without the infliction of fines. Such a system, I have no doubt, could be devised, and on a basis which would render the military service so popular and remunerative that it would be as eagerly sought for as cadetships are.

The changes I should propose for popularising the military service would be the following:—

1. That all regiments should be permanently located in the districts where they are raised. Families would then feel that their sons or relatives were not removed to distant or unhealthy climates. Each regiment would have at its back the reserves—first, second, and third—which could join its ranks at forty-eight hours' notice.

The great expense and inconvenience of an annual change of quarters would thus be avoided.

2. The penalties and fines to be paid by the wealthy for non-service when drawn should be paid into the military chest of the regiment, to form a fund to remunerate the privates and non-commissioned officers after three years' service with the colours, on the recommendation of the commanding officer, or to enable them to set up in some trade.

3. That out of this fund, if available, a bonus should be given to a non-commissioned officer, certified for

good conduct, if he should re-enlist for a period of five years.

4. That the Army should form two separate sections—namely, the home territorial army for Great Britain; the Indian army for India. I do not include the colonies, as in times of peace each colony should maintain its own force, which, in time of war or danger, could be supplemented by the territorial army.

The Indian army should be composed entirely of men who have served three years under the colours, who should volunteer for service in India for ten years, with advantages as to pay, and permission to a limited number for their wives to accompany them. After their ten years' service, they might receive grants of land along the Indian frontiers, so as gradually to form a frontier guard, which would save the expense of their re-patriation, and by degrees form a military colony.

The officers of the Indian army should be, as now, on the same lines as the territorial army, and not confined to the Indian army alone.

In case of war, or if necessity should require it, the Indian army should be supplemented by the territorial army from Great Britain.

The territorial army would form, as it were, a nursery and a reserve in the event of war for the empire at large.

If some such organisation could be devised, I am confident that it would popularise the military service; greatly add to the numerical strength of the Army, and its efficiency; would provide a regular flow of recruits

for selection, without having recruiting officers hunting for them; and, in the course of time, one-third of the Army annually joining the reserve, would form a reserve of sufficient magnitude to allow of a reduction of the standing army in time of peace.

We have now a disjointed military force: 1st. The Regular Army. 2nd. The Militia. 3rd. The Yeomanry. 4th. The Volunteers; and with the exception of the regular force none of the foregoing can be ordered for foreign service without their assent.

The Volunteers should be maintained as a purely volunteer force, and as forming a defensive force for the protection of the country. The Militia and Yeomanry should be fused into the territorial army.

All seaports should be freed from the annual drawing of military recruits, but should be obliged to supply, according to their population, the seamen required for the Navy, with the formation of a reserve, as is the case with the Army.

With the enormous military forces now possessed by the great military Powers, it will be impossible for England to hold her position in Europe as a great Power, unless under some military organisation such as I have adverted to, and of which I have merely given an outline, and which I leave to the consideration of those better informed than I am on military subjects, and more competent to form an opinion. Looking, however, to the future, it appears to me impossible for England, under her present military organisation, to

face the great European Powers, who can place over one million of soldiers in the field.

I will here relate an observation made to me by the late Emperor William.

I had the honour of dining with His Majesty in 1871 (on what occasion my memory fails me). I was seated opposite to His Majesty, and next to Field-Marshal von Wrangel. During the dinner, some reference was made to the European armies, during which I maintained perfect silence. But, on reference to the English Army, His Majesty observed to me, that our Army was "so small." I replied to His Majesty, that during above thirty years of peace we had wisely husbanded our resources, and in comparison with foreign armies, our Army was small. Still, there had never been an European war in which England had been engaged, from which she had not come out victorious. Only lately, on grounds of humanity and not of ambition, England had sent an expedition to Abyssinia, to release some British subjects who, with several subjects of His Majesty, had been imprisoned and maltreated by King Theodore. We released them, took Magdala, and immediately left the country. I doubted whether any of the great military Powers could have done as much.

The Emperor fully admitted the force of my observations, and said that he had followed with interest the Abyssinian campaign, and greatly praised the skill and energy with which it had been conducted.

Having digressed at greater length than I had

intended on the question of military organisation, I will now refer to the other causes which contributed to the elevation of Prussia to the dominant position she had obtained in Europe.

I will mention two, namely : 1st. The vast increase in the course of a few years to her trade and industry. 2nd. To the high state of culture and civilisation so largely promoted by her compulsory system of public education.

In regard to the former, the creation of the "Zollverein," or customs union, was the foundation of her trade and industrial wealth, as it was of her political influence, to which the railways subsequently gave a vigorous development. The coal mines in Westphalia, Silesia, and other parts of Prussia, contributed largely to the manufacturing industry ; and the possession of the Hanse towns added in no small degree to the maritime trade. Thus, by the intelligence and industry of the German people, the wealth of the country has enormously increased during the last forty years ; but the military exigencies and the expenses of the army weigh heavily on the nation.

In regard to the second, namely, public education, there is no country where the education of the people is so extended, or where it is so admirably administered, as in Prussia. It is rare to meet anyone among the lower orders who cannot read or write. The military system is a powerful adjunct to civilisation, inculcating habits of discipline, order, cleanliness, and self-reliance ; thus forming those qualities in youth which in after life are the surest path to success and prosperity.

Nor were Prussia and Germany less distinguished in the promotion of science and the fine arts. They produced some of the first historians and theologians of this century, and some of the most learned professors in every branch of literature and philosophy which have enlightened mankind. The Germans are deep thinkers, and if they have a failing it is that they soar too much in mystic and dreamy regions beyond the comprehension of ordinary mortals.

In painting, the schools of Dusseldorff and Munich afford proofs of the genius, artistic skill, and taste of German artists. In the latter school, the names of Kaulbach, Cornelius, and many others will be recorded in history as among the most celebrated artists of the age. In music the names of Spontini, Mendelssohn, Meyerbeer, will be handed down to future generations as among the most noted composers of this century.

I left Berlin, where I had resided so many years, and where I had many kind friends, with feelings of deep regret. I shall ever retain happy recollections of the many happy days I passed there in my early youth, and shall look back in fond remembrance to the friendships I then formed. Most of my contemporaries of that day have joined "the great majority," and new generations have taken their place; but for me, the "memory of the past remains," and inspires me with a grateful appreciation of it.

Before closing the reminiscences of my seven years' residence as Ambassador at the Court of Prussia, during an eventful period, it affords me much pleasure to

express to the members of my Embassy—my fellow-labourers in that field of duty—my cordial appreciation of the valuable services they rendered to me by the zealous and efficient discharge of their public duties.

The Hon. Lionel Sackville West, now Lord Sackville, was Secretary of Embassy from November, 1867, to June, 1868, when, to my regret, he was transferred to Paris. We were old friends, and had been colleagues at Stuttgart, and also at Berlin. He was in every way a genial companion, and he was a valuable and efficient assistant to me. He was succeeded by Mr. George Petre, late Envoy at Lisbon. Both he and Mrs. Petre, a clever and distinguished lady, were a most agreeable addition to the Embassy, and were much liked in the social circles of Berlin. We lived on very intimate terms with them, and in Mr. Petre I always found a sagacious and trusty counsellor.

Mr. Henry Dering was senior Second Secretary from 1870, and performed his duties with exemplary zeal. To him I committed the management of the payment by the French Government of the monthly “solde de captivité” to the French prisoners of war—a no light task, considering that there were, towards the close of the war, some 300,000 prisoners of war interned in ninety-two fortresses. He performed this duty with great order and regularity, and received the encomiums of the French Government.

The other members of the Embassy to whom I offer this tribute of thanks for the zealous and efficient

performance of their duties, were — Lord Brabazon, now Earl of Meath, who, with Lady Brabazon, added efficiency and brilliancy to the Embassy; Mr. F. Lascelles and Mrs. Lascelles, who were very popular in society, and agreeable additions to our small circle. It has gratified me to learn that the deserved merits of Sir Frank Lascelles have been recognised by his promotions.

I cannot omit to mention Mr. Nicolas O'Connor, now Envoy at Peking, who gave early signs of great intelligence, that presaged a successful career. He was very popular, both among his colleagues and in society.

Mr. W. Cockerell, a junior clerk in the Foreign Office, was temporarily attached to the Embassy in 1868 as Second Secretary. He was an able and zealous public servant, and on being recalled to his duties at the Foreign Office, his departure caused general regret.

Mr. Hugh Wyndham, now Envoy to the Brazils, was Second Secretary up to 1868, when he was transferred to Brussels. He was an excellent public servant, and with his charming wife, greatly added to the sociability of the Embassy.

Mr. Percy Mitford was also Second Secretary to the Embassy at Berlin for some time, and with his bright and clever wife (my niece) were most agreeable additions to our social circle. Had Mr. Mitford remained in the Diplomatic Service he would undoubtedly have made a brilliant career, for he was full of talent and ambition, but it pleased the Almighty to call him to a happier world in the prime of life, to the grief of his many sorrowing friends.

APPENDIX.

Despatch of the Duke of Gramont to Count Benedetti.

(Translation.)

Paris, July 7th, 1870.

MONSIEUR LE COMTE,—Having accepted your offer to go to Ems to see the King of Prussia, I think it useful to send you the enclosed documents explanatory of the position.

I therefore annex—

1. The telegram and report of Baron Mercier, in which he gives account of the conversation when Marshal Prim first spoke of the candidature of the Prince of Hohenzollern for the throne of Spain.

2. The telegram that I addressed M. Lesourd on receipt of this grave intelligence.

3. The telegraphic reply, and the report of M. Lesourd resuming the explanations of Baron Thile.

4. The despatch which I addressed to our Chargé d’Affaires at Berlin to explain to him the opinions of the Government of the Emperor, and to appeal to the wisdom and moderation of the King of Prussia.

5. The declaration which, under pressure of the public feeling, we had thought necessary to make to the Legislative body.

6. A fresh report of M. Mercier received this morning, giving a sketch of the excitement caused in Spain by the combination of which Marshal Prim is the promoter.

These documents will inform you of the state of things, and

will dispense me from insisting at greater length on the extent of the intrigue which has been so carefully concealed from us, and on the explanation which the revelation itself of a project, as offensive to our dignity as it was contrary to our interests, was of a nature to create.

En résumé, the Prince of Hohenzollern has accepted the candidature to the throne which has been offered to him by Marshal Prim. The Cabinet has not ignored the fact, but it declares itself to have been unacquainted with it, at least officially, and, according to the language of Baron Thile, the Prince of Hohenzollern alone took part in the negotiation.

At the point at which the question is now arrived, and with the character which it has taken in consequence of the emotion felt in France, it is of great interest that light should be shown on the real dispositions of Prussia, and we await the best results of your mission to the King, for we have the firm hope that, having learnt directly from you the sincere and true account of the situation as it is in reality, His Majesty, with his high sense of equity, will not allow any longer a doubt to exist as to the intentions of his Government. If the head of the family of Hohenzollern has been hitherto indifferent as to this affair, we ask him to be so no longer, and we request him to intervene, if not by his orders, at least by his counsels, with Prince Leopold. Given with the authority appertaining to it, they will not fail to exercise a decisive influence on the resolution of the Prince, and will cause to disappear, with the project formed by Marshal Prim in regard to this candidature, the deep disquietude which it had everywhere produced.

The agitation consequent thereon in Spain, the ardour that parties show to recommence the struggle, prove that civil war is certain if the execution of this plan is carried out; and nobody doubts that, taking possession of the throne on such conditions, the new sovereign would be reduced to the impossibility of maintaining himself in Spain. In diverting his thoughts from engaging himself further in these negotiations, and in affording him the means of an honourable retreat, the King will save him

the trials of an enterprise which may cause much Spanish blood to flow, but which cannot really offer any chance of success after the misfortunes which it will have caused.

As for ourselves, Monsieur Le Comte, we should see especially, in the intervention of King William to oppose the realisation of this project, the service which it would render to the cause of peace, and a pledge of the strength of the good relations with Prussia. The Emperor's Government would appreciate a proceeding which, it cannot be doubted, would receive at the same time universal approbation.

Let these considerations inspire you, utilise them with the King, and endeavour to obtain that His Majesty advises the Prince of Hohenzollern to renounce his acceptance.

(Signed) GRAMONT.

The following is the summary of the despatch addressed by Count Benedetti to the Duke of Gramont,* dated

Ems, July 9th, 1870.

At the hour named for my audience I waited on the King. I laid before His Majesty the state of things produced by the candidanship of the Prince of Hohenzollern—the agitation in Spain; the disorders consequent on it; the emotion in France; the general disfavour of a project equally disastrous to the tranquillity of Spain and to the good relations existing between the great Powers. The King, I said, might prevent all these calamities and the explosion of a civil war, for which a member of his house would be responsible. The Prince of Hohenzollern could not accept the throne of Spain without the authorisation of His Majesty. Let the King dissuade him from this enterprise, and the alarm which had seized all minds would at once cease. Appealing to the wisdom and heart of the King, I besought His Majesty to give to Europe this proof of his generous sentiments.

* Appendix, "Ma Mission en Prusse," p. 328.

The King said that the character of his intervention in this affair must not be mistaken—the negotiations had been carried on by the Spanish Government and the Prince of Hohenzollern. The Prussian Government had not only been unacquainted with them, but had ignored them; the King himself had avoided being associated with them. He had refused to receive an envoy of the Spanish Cabinet, bearer of a letter from Marshal Prim, while informing his Minister, Count Bismarck, of these incidents. He only consented to an explanation when Prince Leopold, having decided to acquiesce in the proposals made to him, solicited his assent, which happened on his arrival at Ems, and then he confined himself to declaring that he did not think that he could oppose his purpose.

It was, therefore, as head of the family, and by no means in his sovereign capacity as King of Prussia, that he had been informed of the determination of the Prince, and that he had intervened; neither had he consulted the Council of Ministers; and the Prussian Government could not be questioned on a matter which they had not had cognisance of, and for which they were not more accountable than any other European Cabinet.

I replied that public opinion only regarded the Prince of Hohenzollern in the light of a member of the reigning family in Prussia, who, by accepting the throne of Spain, united two thrones in the same dynasty; that the national feeling in France was unanimous in this conviction, and the King should consider that it was impossible for the Government of the Emperor to be indifferent to it.

The King observed that the Spanish Government was supreme, and had been acknowledged by all the European Powers, and his Majesty could not imagine on what grounds opposition could be made to the choice of a sovereign elected by the representatives of the nation. The Spanish Minister at Berlin had communicated to the Government at Berlin (the first and only communication they had received) that the Cortes

would meet on the 20th inst., and that they would reject the candidateship of the Prince of Hohenzollern should it not satisfy the wish of the populations.

In referring to the part—to a certain degree negative—which he had taken in this matter, the King repeated that he had in no way encouraged Prince Leopold to accept the overtures of the Spanish Cabinet; that he had confined himself to not forbidding it; that he could not deviate from the position that he had maintained from the commencement, and exercise now his right to compel him to recede from the engagement he had contracted; that the French Government should use their efforts at Madrid, and employ all their influence there to determine the Regent to renounce his project.

I observed to His Majesty that in referring to Madrid they would only increase the embarrassments of the Spanish Government; that, on the contrary, I said, we give a striking proof of the sincerity of our sentiments, and render homage to those of His Majesty in asking him to interpose his all-powerful authority in a question which affects us in so many respects, and which can assuredly be exercised without any prejudice to Prussia.

In referring to the declaration of the Duke of Gramont to the Corps Législatif, the King expressed the opinion that the honour of France had not been, nor could be, affected by the decision of the Prince of Hohenzollern. It had been preceded by negotiations freely with the Cabinet of Madrid, in which no other Government had taken part. He could not, therefore, see any subject of disagreement or conflict, or admit that war could arise from an incident in which no Power had intervened.

I concurred with His Majesty in protesting against any such eventuality, observing that his presence at Ems gave evidence of the pacific and conciliating intentions of the Government of the Emperor.

During the course of the audience (continues Count Benedetti in his despatch), the King several times signified that

if he could not exercise his authority to decide Prince Leopold to withdraw the word he had given, His Majesty would abstain from turning him from this purpose. Explaining himself more clearly on the subject, the King assured me that he meant to leave him complete liberty of action after, not before his acceptance; that, besides, he was in communication with Prince Antoine, who was at Sigmaringen, and that he had inquired from him what were his intentions and those of his son, and also as to the manner in which they regarded the emotion caused in France by the assent they had given to the proposals of the Spanish Cabinet; that it was of consequence to him to be correctly enlightened on this subject, in order to continue his conversation and to make known to Count Benedetti the decision which may be taken. On my expressing the wish to know when His Majesty could receive the information he expected, the King replied that, having no cypher to communicate with Prince Antoine, he was unable to telegraph, but that it would not be long before he was sufficiently informed.

Substance of Telegram from Count Benedetti to Duke of Gramont.

On the 10th of July Count Benedetti met the King on the Promenade,* and was informed by His Majesty that he had received no answer from Prince Leopold, who had not yet joined his father. Count Benedetti remarked to His Majesty that the moment was coming when the Emperor's Government could no longer postpone the explanations they owed to the Chambers and the country. The Ambassador asked permission to lay before His Majesty the necessities of their position. The King appointed the following morning for his audience.

Analysis of the Despatch of Count Benedetti, reporting the result of his second audience of the King of Prussia at Paris, on the 11th of July, 1870.

The Ambassador, as instructed, requested the King to

* Benedetti, "Ma Mission en Prusse," page 359.

authorise him to announce that he “would invite the Prince of Hohenzollern to renounce his candidature,” and he supported this request by his previous arguments submitted to the King at his first audience.

The King frequently repeated the objections he had expressed at the previous audience, and especially laid stress on his having intervened as “head of the family,” which, in his opinion, could engage neither the Sovereign of Prussia nor his Government.

Count Benedetti urged that this duality of title would not be understood, neither was it admissible; that the King was the head of the family because he was the sovereign; that the Prince of Hohenzollern owed him absolute obedience, solely because His Majesty united these two titles in his person, and that it was easily understood why the accession of Prince Leopold was regarded in France as the restoration of the Empire of Charles the Fifth.

The King contested this view, saying that the election of Prince Leopold would create no new obligation, nor any national link between Spain and Prussia.

The Ambassador replied that the dynastic relations resulting from this combination imposed on France the duty to oppose such an eventuality. Is it not evident, he asked, that, in case of any disagreement between the Government of your Majesty and that of the Emperor, we should be obliged to watch the frontier of the Pyrenees, and thus divide our forces? Our line of conduct is, therefore, indicated by the exigencies of our own safety, and we cannot on this occasion be reproached with raising a conflict voluntarily.

“According to the King,” says Benedetti, “I had exaggerated the importance of a combination which, on his part, he had never desired. It was evident, from the expressions he used, that he considered it incompatible with his sovereign dignity to require a renunciation from Prince Leopold after having declared that he did not forbid his acceptance of the throne of Spain. Above all, the King does not wish to assume the responsibility of a

‘retreat’ or a concession which would shock public opinion in Germany.”

“Moreover (the King continued), *Il n’y avait pas péril dans la demeure*, and one or two days’ delay could not aggravate the question. He expected to hear from Sigmaringen that evening or the next morning, and we could then suitably consider it.

“I then urged the necessity—under the excitement prevailing in France—for the Emperor’s Ministers to announce that Prince Leopold will voluntarily withdraw the adhesion he had given to the overtures of the Madrid Cabinet.

“The King observed that our insistence, when he only required a short delay to learn the intentions of the two Princes of Hohenzollern, might lead him to think that we intended to provoke a conflict. I repudiated any such supposition, adding that I offered to the King the means of assuring himself of our true sentiments, in soliciting His Majesty to guarantee to us the renunciation of the Prince of Hohenzollern.

“It was at this moment that the King said to me, ‘I am aware of the preparations which are being made at Paris, and I ought not to conceal from you that I myself am taking my precautions, in order not to be taken by surprise.’

“His Majesty tried later to attenuate the gravity of these words, in endeavouring to prove to me that he still had entire confidence in the maintenance of peace. ‘*Elle ne sera pas troublée, si l’on veut attendre à Paris que je sois en mesure d’y contribuer utilement, en me laissant le temps qui m’est nécessaire.*’ ”

Count Benedetti replied that the Ministers themselves were unable to defer the explanations which the whole country demanded, and that they could not well, without offending the public opinion, allege that Prince Leopold was travelling, and that the King was awaiting his return for a decision.

“Your Majesty,” said the Ambassador, “can settle everything by permitting me to inform the Government of the Emperor, ‘*qu’il ne sera donné aucune suite à l’acceptation envoyée par le Prince à Madrid ; je la conjure encore une fois de m’y autoriser.*’ ”

The King repeated that he could not accede to this request. He explained the absence of Prince Leopold, stating that at the time when he acceded to the pressing solicitation of Marshal Prim it had been understood that the Cortes would be convoked after a delay of three months, and that the combination would only be made public on the opening of that Assembly. Not foreseeing that Marshal Prim would prematurely disclose the arrangement which had been concluded to the French Ambassador at Madrid, Prince Leopold considered that he might absent himself without inconvenience.

*Telegram addressed by the French Government to Foreign Governments.**
(Translation.)

After the news of the renunciation of the Hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern had been officially communicated to the Imperial French Government by the Royal Spanish Government, the French Ambassador at Ems further demanded of His Majesty the King to authorise him to telegraph to Paris that His Majesty the King engages for all future time never again to give his consent if the Hohenzollerns should again return to the candidature. His Majesty the King thereon declined to receive the French Ambassador again, and had him told by the Adjutant in attendance that His Majesty had nothing further to communicate to the Ambassador.

Memorandum of what occurred at Ems, drawn up at the command, and with the approval of, the King of Prussia.

(Translation.)

On the 9th inst. (July) Count Benedetti asked at Ems for an audience of the King, which was at once granted to him. Wherein he required that the King should order the Hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern to withdraw his acceptance of the Spanish crown. The King replied that as throughout the

* From Parliamentary Papers, Franco-Prussian War, No. 3, 1870.

whole affair he had only been applied to as head of the family, and never as King of Prussia, that as, therefore, he had given no order for accepting the candidature of the throne, neither could he give any order for the retractation. On the 11th inst. the French Ambassador asked for, and obtained, a "second" audience, wherein he tried to exert a pressure on the King to the end that he should urge the Prince to renounce the crown. The King replied that the Prince was entirely free in his resolutions; moreover, that he himself did not even know where the Prince (who wanted to take an Alpine journey) was at that moment. On the Fountain Promenade, in the morning of the 13th, the King gave the Ambassador an extra number of the *Cologne Gazette*, which had just been delivered to himself, with a private telegram from Sigmaringen on the renunciation of the Prince, the King remarking that he himself had not yet received any letter from Sigmaringen, but might expect one to-day. Count Benedetti mentioned that he had received news of the renunciation from Paris the evening before; and as the King thereupon looked upon the matter as settled, the Ambassador now quite unexpectedly required of the King that he should pronounce a distinct assurance that he never again would give his consent if the candidature for the crown in question should be ever revived. The King decidedly refused such a demand, and kept to that decision, as Count Benedetti repeatedly, and even more urgently, returned to his proposition. Nevertheless, after some hours, Count Benedetti sought a "third" audience. On inquiry what was the subject to be spoken of, he returned answer that he wished to recur to that spoken of in the morning. The King refused a fresh audience on this ground, as he had no other answer than the one given; moreover, that from thenceforward all negotiations were to go on through the Ministers. Count Benedetti's wish to take leave of the King on his departure was acceded to, as he saluted him at the station on the 14th, in passing on a journey to Coblenz. According to this, therefore, the Ambassador had "three" audiences of the King, which always

bore the character of private conversations, as Count Benedetti never conducted himself as a commissioner or negotiator.

*Report of the Adjutant in attendance on the King of Prussia
(Translation.) at Ems.*

His Majesty the King, in consequence of a conversation with Count Benedetti on the Fountain Promenade early on the 13th of July, graciously sent me, about two in the afternoon, with the following message to the Count:—

“His Majesty had received an hour before, by written communication of the Prince of Hohenzollern from Sigmaringen, the full corroboration of what the Count had communicated to him in the morning as learnt direct from Paris, in regard to the renunciation by Prince Leopold of the candidature to the Spanish throne. His Majesty therewith looks upon this affair as settled.”

Count Benedetti said, after I had delivered this message to him, that, since his conversation with the King, he had received a fresh despatch from the Duke of Gramont, in which he was instructed to request an audience of His Majesty, and to submit once more to His Majesty the wish of the French Government:—

1. To approve the renunciation of the Prince of Hohenzollern; and (2) to give an assurance that this candidature would not again be taken up in the future.

Hereupon His Majesty caused answer to be given to the Count, through me, that His Majesty approved the renunciation of Prince Leopold in the same sense and to the same extent as His Majesty had previously approved the acceptance of this candidature. His Majesty had received the written communication of the renunciation from Prince Antony of Hohenzollern, who was authorised thereto by Prince Leopold. In regard to the second point—the assurance for the future—His Majesty could only refer to what he had himself replied to the Count in the morning.

Count Benedetti thankfully accepted this answer of the King's, and said he would mention it again to his Government, as he was authorised to do.

But with regard to the second point, he must persist in his request for another conversation with His Majesty, as he was expressly instructed to do so in the last despatch from the Duke of Gramont, and even if it were only to hear the same words from His Majesty again; the more so as there were fresh arguments in this last despatch which he wished to submit to His Majesty.

Hereupon His Majesty caused answer to be given to the Count, through me, for the "third" time, about half-past five o'clock, that His Majesty must positively decline to enter into further discussion in regard to this last point—a binding assurance for the future. What he had said in the morning was His Majesty's last word on this matter, and he could do no more than refer to it.

On the assurance that Count Bismarck's arrival at Ems could not be positively depended upon, even for the next day, Count Benedetti declared that he, on his part, would rest content with the declaration of His Majesty the King.

(Signed) A. RADZIVILL.

Lt.-Col. and Adj.-Maj. to His Majesty the King of Prussia.

*Treaty between England and Prussia respecting Belgium.**

Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and His Majesty the King of Prussia, being desirous at the present time of recording in a solemn act their fixed determination to maintain the independence and neutrality of Belgium, as provided in the 7th Article of the

* A similar Treaty — *mutatis mutandis* — was signed between England and France.

Treaty signed at London on the 19th of April, 1839, between Belgium and the Netherlands, which Article was declared by the Quintuple Treaty of 1839 to be considered as having the same force as if textually inserted in the said Quintuple Treaty, their said Majesties have determined to conclude between themselves a separate treaty, which, without impairing or invalidating the conditions of the said Quintuple Treaty, shall be subsidiary and accessory to it; and they have accordingly named as their plenipotentiaries for that purpose—that is to say, Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and His Majesty the King of Prussia, etc. etc.—who, after having communicated to each other their respective full powers, have agreed upon and concluded the following Articles :—

ARTICLE I.

His Majesty the King of Prussia, having declared that, notwithstanding the hostilities in which the North-German Confederation is engaged with France, it is his fixed determination to respect the neutrality of Belgium so long as the same shall be respected by France, Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, on her part, declares that if, during the said hostilities, the armies of France should violate that neutrality, she will be prepared to co-operate with His Prussian Majesty for the defence of the same in such a manner as may be mutually agreed upon, employing for that purpose her naval and military forces to ensure its observance, and to maintain, in conjunction with His Prussian Majesty, then and thereafter, the independence and neutrality of Belgium.

It is clearly understood that Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland does not engage herself by this Treaty to take part in any of the general operations of the war now carried on between the North-German Confederation and France beyond the limits of Belgium as defined by the Treaty between Belgium and the Netherlands of April 19th, 1839.

ARTICLE II.

His Majesty the King of Prussia agrees on his part, in the event provided for in the foregoing Article, to co-operate with Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, employing his naval and military forces for the purpose aforesaid ; and—the case arising—to concert with Her Majesty the measures which shall be taken, separately or in common, to secure the neutrality and independence of Belgium.

ARTICLE III.

This Treaty shall be binding on the High Contracting Parties during the continuance of the present war between the North-German Confederation and France, and for twelve months after the ratification of any Treaty of Peace concluded between those Parties ; and, on the expiration of that time, the independence and neutrality of Belgium will, so far as the High Contracting Parties are respectively concerned, continue to rest, as heretofore, on the first Article of the Quintuple Treaty of the 19th of April, 1839.

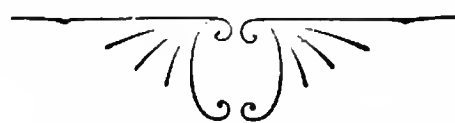
ARTICLE IV.

The present Treaty shall be ratified, etc. etc.

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